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#53 SUMMER 1996

THE LOST MASTERS REVIEWED

Backstreets

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Pilgrim
in the temple of love
Springsteen in Europe • Rome through Madrid

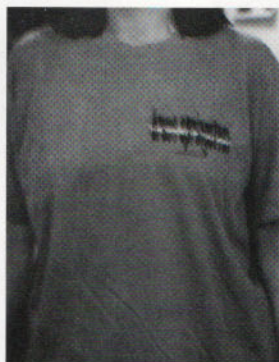


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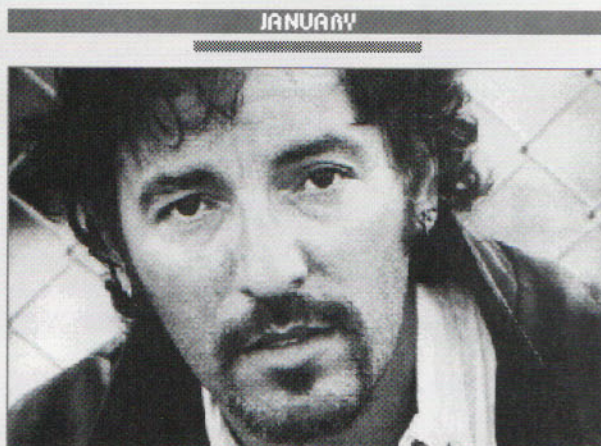
A brown long-sleeve henley shirt with three buttons, with "Bruce Springsteen: Ghost of Tom Joad" embroidery on the left front chest. Available in L and XL..... \$30



A nice gray garment-dyed t-shirt, with "Bruce Springsteen: Ghost of Tom Joad" silkscreened on the left front chest. On the back is an illustration of a highway heading into the distance, "The Highway is Alive Tonight." L and XL.....\$20



A two-toned baseball cap, olive green top with a black brim, with nice "Bruce Springsteen: Ghost of Tom Joad" embroidery.....\$16

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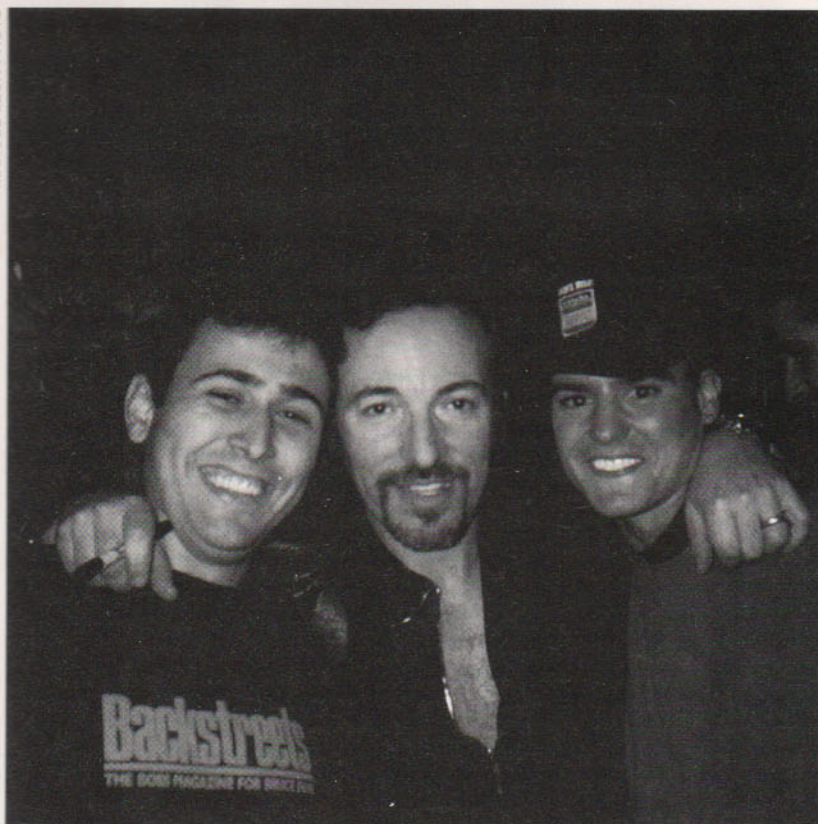
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Backstreets

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BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

12/15/95 Boston, MA
 Steven Marlin Photo

OFF THE WALL

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

Douglas H. Heath Photo

LETTERS

LONG AND DARK

Dear Editor:

When I first heard *The Ghost of Tom Joad*, I thought here's an album that really separates the men from the boys. Like *Nebraska*, here's a statement that comes out of left field and challenges not only the listener but more importantly Bruce's peers. Wasn't it Bob Seger who, surprised after hearing that the *Nebraska* tape was actually the official release, admiringly called Bruce "our fearless leader"?

Beyond the content or the "voice" of the record, which has been discussed in great detail, beyond Dave Marsh's suggestion that *Tom Joad* was intended to "lower the volume," this album reminds us that Springsteen after 25 years is still able to ask new things of his listeners. Those of you on paper and on the Internet who are clamoring for the old guy who wrote "Jungleland" or "Rosalita," you're not listening...

Which conversely leads me to the review of the tour by Charles Cross. I'm as sick of the E Street reunion rumors and headbands and hangers-on as anyone could be, but don't you think it's a bit much to criticize Springsteen for playing too many "crowd

pleasers"? God forbid, he might please the crowd on this tour. Overall the focus of this tour is arrow-straight, almost every song in the opening set leading to the border songs finds its voice during this show. From the kid in "Adam Raised a Cain" who sees his father worn down and angry from his own resentment to the wistful appreciation of the "Little Things That Count."

If Bruce offers a little nostalgia on his way out the door, accept it. But it's only nostalgia if you're not listening. How different are the guys in "Sinaloa Cowboys" from the singer in "Bobby Jean"? "Does This Bus Stop," at the very least in it's humorous reference to Dylan, is a tip of the hat to the musical mode that Bruce has taken us on this tour. I don't expect to hear "Sherry Darling" anytime soon, but if Bruce throws it in during a weak moment, I doubt I'll protest that somehow pleasing the crowd ruined my evening.

Joseph Lahr
Manchester, NH

DRIVE ALL NIGHT

Dear Editor:

My introduction to Bruce's music was 12 years ago, when I was 11 years old. My connection with his music was very immediate and very intense. I could appreciate his passion for music.

Living in a small town nowhere remotely close to any Springsteen shows, my enjoyment had to be restricted to his major label releases, videos, biographies, and this magazine. Up until last year. For the past three years I have told myself that I would see Bruce on his next tour no matter where I have to go. So when I heard about his solo acoustic tour I was determined to get to a show.

I drove for three days to Toronto, Ontario, with no guarantee of a ticket but very high hopes. I was sadly disappointed when I didn't get in. While waiting outside the theater I told a security guard my story but he couldn't do anything for me. He did, however, take me around to the back of the building where, if I put my ear against the door, I could almost hear Springsteen singing.

I walked away that night very depressed but tried to look on the bright side by saying, "Well, it was only an acoustic show, how good can it be?" After reading the tour reports in the last issue of *Backstreets*, I realize I've missed a very significant and magical show. As a Springsteen fan I don't feel complete without seeing him in concert which is what he does best... or so I'm told.

Gary Mills
Bishop's Falls, NF, Canada

YOU'LL END UP IN DUTCH

Dear Editor:

At the age of 17 I discovered a song that drove deep into my heart. The song was "Downbound Train" and the artist a Mr. Bruce Springsteen. Never before had I felt like crying after a song. And so it began.

Over the next year I shook with the energy of *Greetings*, rocked to the beauty of *Wild and Innocent*, died with *Darkness*, danced and cried with *The River*, studied *Nebraska*, puzzled over *Tunnel* and screamed with the crowds in the live album. By eighteen I felt like a true "tramp."

The 1992-93 World Tour provided a rude awakening. After finding myself at the very back of both Wembley and Sheffield Arenas, I decided that it was time to put my finger on the Springsteen pulse. I had always known about *Backstreets* and *Badlands/For True* but had avoided them, knowing I could never afford the subscription. A solution was on hand when a friend subscribed—I would wait and then borrow the magazines, trembling with excitement and anticipation. My dreams were to be shattered.

I found myself in a world of bootlegs and outtakes. Where songs I'd never heard of were mentioned continuously. Where merchandising and advertisements sat all too comfortably under pictures of Bruce. Where articles concentrated on the rare and unavailable. Where "fans" talked of going to every concert on a particular tour. Where people showed off their Bruce memorabilia. Eventually all I saw was the need for money.

My anger came to a head at his recent concert at Birmingham Symphony Hall. Being able to only afford one concert in the entire tour, I was planning on enjoying it. The concert itself was amazing. Nothing could spoil my enjoyment.

At the end, my friend and I decided to see if we could meet the man himself. As we walked to his hotel we were approached by someone handing out *Badlands* flyers. Still alive with the energy of the concert, I asked what he thought of the performance. "Boring!" was his reply. He then continued handing out subscription forms for *For True*

TOM JOAD CD SINGLES



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•**EURO "DEAD MAN WALKIN'" CD5** More live b-sides! Two live tracks from the Columbia Records Radio Hour broadcast: "This Hard Land" and "Does This Bus Stop at 82nd Street." Also includes studio "Hwy 29.".....\$14

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Rockers Only. Slightly buckled we continued to the hotel where we were met by two fans who, although polite, seemed unresponsive and purposefully distant. It appeared the desire to meet Bruce Springsteen was solely theirs and we should leave. We didn't. But our disillusion grew.

An hour later we were cold but still enthusiastic. At that point another "fan" emerged from the hotel to tell us that Bruce had definitely left for the airport. After some convincing we took this to be true but left only when one of the three "fans" asked us to "excuse them" while they exchanged addresses. It appears that the need to show off memorabilia supersedes the need to be polite.

By this time my friend and I were truly deflated. Not only because we would not meet Bruce Springsteen, but also because of the way we were being treated. Our last stand was a frantic lawless drive to the airport and a yet more frantic run around the complex. But he had left. Our drive home was silent.

I can handle not meeting Springsteen. We always knew that was relentless idealism. But not our continual exclusion. I'd love to be able to subscribe to the magazines, afford the bootlegs and memorabilia and go to all the concerts—but I can't. We all live within specific parameters—one of my biggest is money. As for the "fans," it appears all the "tramps" have climbed the social ladder.

All I and many others have to offer is our enthusiasm. That doesn't cost a penny. Perhaps the "fans" should look down and see that at one time that was all they had too. And for those of you who were at the concert (or buy the bootleg), the person who asked for the song about sex ("Little Things") was me. So if Bruce Springsteen can respond to my enthusiasm, then maybe his fans should too.

Pritpal S. Tamber
Birmingham, England

I'M A ROCKER

Dear Editor:

Here I am sitting and listening to *The River* and thinking about how much I miss this era of Bruce's career and life. I also went through my Bruce collection that

I've amassed since I was 11 (back in '75) and longed for that rebel that I've admired and related to most of my life. Those were magical times for me and thousands of other Bruce fans. But as the saying goes, time marches on. I have to admit that I'm in denial about the whole growing older thing. I just received the latest *Backstreets* and noticed how old Bruce looks with his hair all greased back. It's hard to believe that he is coming up on his 47th birthday—almost 50, with three kids and a wife.

Well, this is not a complaint letter, just a "get it off my chest" letter. I have a wife and two kids myself. I still like to go driving, but I find myself listening to *BTR*, *Darkness*, *The River*, or *BUSA*. *Ghost* is an outstanding album, but I usually listen to it late at night. I think it's been a long decade for Bruce, starting with *Tunnel*; I haven't even listened to *HT* or *LT* in over a year. All I want to do again with Bruce and the boys is to rock 'n' roll!

Jeff Mahon
Lahaina, HI

OUT IN THE STREET

Dear Editor:

Let me begin by saying that being a 17-year-old girl from Long Island and a devoted Bruce Springsteen fan is pretty rare. Recently, however, I had an opportunity to meet others who are just as passionate or perhaps even more dedicated Springsteen fans than myself.

I awoke before the sun rose on the brisk November day when wristbands would be handed out; the announcement that the Boss would be performing two solo-acoustic shows at the Beacon Theater was made two nights earlier.

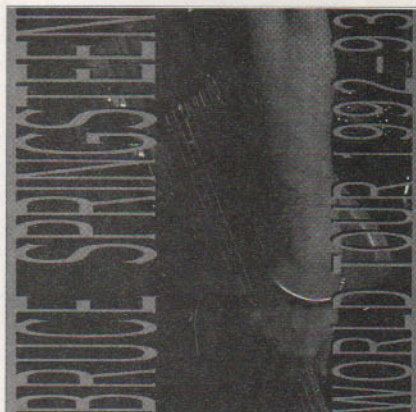
Believe it or not, my older friend and I were the first Bruce fans on line at the only Ticketmaster location on Long Island, dressed in layers and prepared to withstand the cold. Before we could blink our eyes, a line behind us began to form. The first seven people arrived immediately, and we shared Bruce experiences, feelings and facts. In two words, we bonded.

I knew that there were other fans out there, but now I actually saw them. One man was getting

Continued page 34

ORIGINAL SPRINGSTEEN TOURBOOKS

These officially licensed tourbooks are out of print and have been unavailable anywhere since they were sold exclusively at concerts. Essential items and great gifts for any Bruce fan!



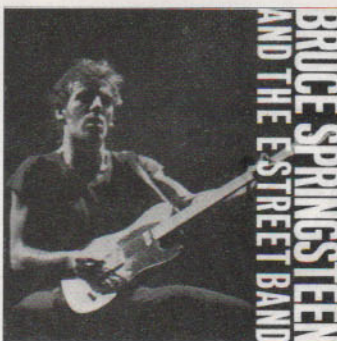
This 32-page color program features stunning color photos of Bruce on-stage and off, taken by Neal Preston, Annie Leibovitz, and others. Profiles on each of the new band members. Glossy covers, matte pages. A gorgeous edition.

**WORLD TOUR
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This lavish, oversized tourbook sold on the *Tunnel* tour contains dozens of striking color photos of Springsteen and the band, along with the lyrics to the LP (including "Roulette") and Bill Barol's excellent feature on *Tunnel* from *Newsweek*, 11/2/87.

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Santa Claus is coming... sorta

Long Distance Salvation

By Charles R. Cross

On the 16th of April, Bruce Springsteen stunned an audience in London's Royal Albert Hall by playing a new song about, in part, a guy in a Santa Claus suit getting a blowjob in the backseat of a Mazda. Though it was officially titled "Pilgrim in the Temple of Love," Springsteen fans immediately began calling it "Santa Gets a Blowjob." It was such an unlikely song—Springsteen introduced it by saying it came directly from his diary, so we can only assume a real life event inspired the tune—that when we first got a set list faxed to us, on the afternoon of April 16, Seattle-time, I thought it was a late April Fool's joke. But here in the *Backstreets* office, more faxed reports filtered in, friends called from England, and e-mail showed up on our computer which made it a pretty sure bet that it wasn't just one person's hallucination. Soon enough a tape recording played over transatlantic phone lines allowed us to hear it for ourselves, and we were just as shocked as the fans at the Royal Albert Hall.

But perhaps as shocking as "Santa Gets a Blowjob" is, it's even more shocking when you consider how quickly information travels these days. Back when *Backstreets* began in 1980, about the only way you could find out about out-of-town shows was if you saw them yourself or talked with friends. Back then we had an occasional radio broadcast to keep us up, but out here on the West Coast those were usually delayed if played at all. Few media outlets covered what Springsteen did, and there was nowhere to find a set list other than through fanzines. At least part of the reason we started *Backstreets* was to help keep fans, who were scattered around the globe, informed of what Springsteen was doing and what he'd played. And though our quarterly magazine has never

been as timely as we'd like, the *Backstreets* Hotline has helped (a few times, like after the first show of the tour, we've managed to have the set list on our phone line before the entire crowd had left the theater). With so many forms of instant communication these days, *Backstreets*' mission has evolved somewhat: Our goal now is to be able to give you the most complete and accurate details of Springsteen's career and to provide the kind of analysis and reporting that explains what it means.

But back to the "Blowjob" song. Four days after Bruce had debuted the song in London, he played the Queen Elisabeth Theatre in Antwerp, Belgium, Springsteen was surprised when, during the normally quiet show, a member of the audience shouted out "Santa." And he wasn't requesting "Santa Claus Is Coming to Town." Thankfully, the fan—actually the editor of the Belgium fanzine *Thunder Road*—didn't shout out "Blowjob."

Bruce seemed more surprised to hear this request than any of the others that were also yelled from the crowd. He asked the audience, though it was more him asking himself, "How did you know that song—I only sang it once before?" But it inspired a laugh from Bruce, and that seemed be all it took to put him in the mood to be playful again. When I heard that Springsteen had first played this song in London, I remember that my first comment was "we'll never hear that one again." But sure enough, after being prodded by the audience member in Belgium, Springsteen reprised "Pilgrim." Bruce even commented on it several times during the show, joking, "I see those reviews: 1975, 'Born to Run'; 1985, 'Born in the USA'; 1995, 'Santa Claus Got a Blowjob.' Have to keep the leg-end growing!"

Springsteen played ten more shows after that Belgium gig, and he performed "Pilgrim" at half of them. He also pulled "Red Head-

ed Woman" out to follow it for what some fans joked was the "oral sex set." It was the part of the show where you'd want to take your kids to the bathroom.

There have always been fanatical fans who have yelled from the audience for special songs (you can bet that after hearing Springsteen do "The Promise" for the first time, I was screaming like a maniac the next time I saw him for him to do it again), but in this age there are no secrets, and fewer one-offs. When Bruce does a song about Santa Claus getting a blowjob, fans are soon debating the merits of the tune all over the world (though it's a funny song, and certainly bizarre, many argued that it wasn't the pinnacle of his art).

These days communication between Springsteen fans means voice mail, or e-mail or surfing the world wide web. Though *Backstreets* remains the Springsteen-related news source with by far the largest readership in the world, lots of information is now on computer bulletin boards or sent through list serve digests. The Luckytown Digest—which the editors of *Backstreets* read and post to regularly—is one of the best sources of instant communication for set lists from around the world, though it's interspersed with an ungodly amount of personal opinion to scroll through (to subscribe to Luckytown, send an e-mail message to <luckytown—request@netcom.com>). There are also numerous Springsteen-related web sites and bulletin boards, all of which can be good sources of information (and frequently, good sources of false information depending on who is doing the posting).

In early July *Backstreets* joined the world of cyberspace with our own web page, which can be found at <<http://members.aol.com/joeroberts/>>. Though our web site won't be a substitute for the *Backstreets* Hotline—a phone information service provided only to subscribers, which continues as usual—it will be a place

for us to instantaneously update those with computer access on the latest goings on.

You'll also find a reasonably complete listing of the *Backstreet* Records catalog attached to our site, so if you decide at three in the morning that you need to stock up on *Human Touch* tourbooks or back issues to our little magazine, you can always find the information. I'm sure that the next time Springsteen debuts some strange song about oral sex, it most likely will be listed on our web site, just as it is debated in the pages of our magazine, talked about on the Hotline, and bantered about in endless e-mails.

Still, I'm a little old-fashioned myself and until I first heard a friend's voice telling me that Bruce really did do a song about Santa and oral sex, I didn't believe it. I'm still not sure I believe it.

BUSINESS STUFF: As we mentioned in *Backstreets* #52, the *Backstreets* Hotline number has changed. We change the number from time to time to keep it as easy as possible to reach, but the number will always be listed when you receive the magazine in the mail. So before you recycle that extra paper, be sure you've got the new number—it's on the mailing envelope (for SuperSubs and non-U.S. subscribers) or on the insert sheet (for U.S. subscribers). You'll find your "X" number there too, it's the top line on your mailing label, and it tells you the last issue of your current subscription. If you're an X53, make sure you renew now so you won't miss a thing. And if you've picked up this issue on a newsstand, see page 34 for information on how to subscribe. Subscribing is the best way to support *Backstreets* (while saving a few bucks), and you'll be sure to get the Hotline number as well as the next four issues delivered straight to your door. ➔

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TOM JOAD 7" PICTURE DISC This UK pic disc has "The Ghost of Tom Joad" b/w "Straight Time" live at the Tower Theater. A-side photo as shown above left. Comes in a nice clear sleeve with type printed on the sleeve in red; also has numbered insert card/lyric sheet.. Very nice, and very limited, too.....\$14

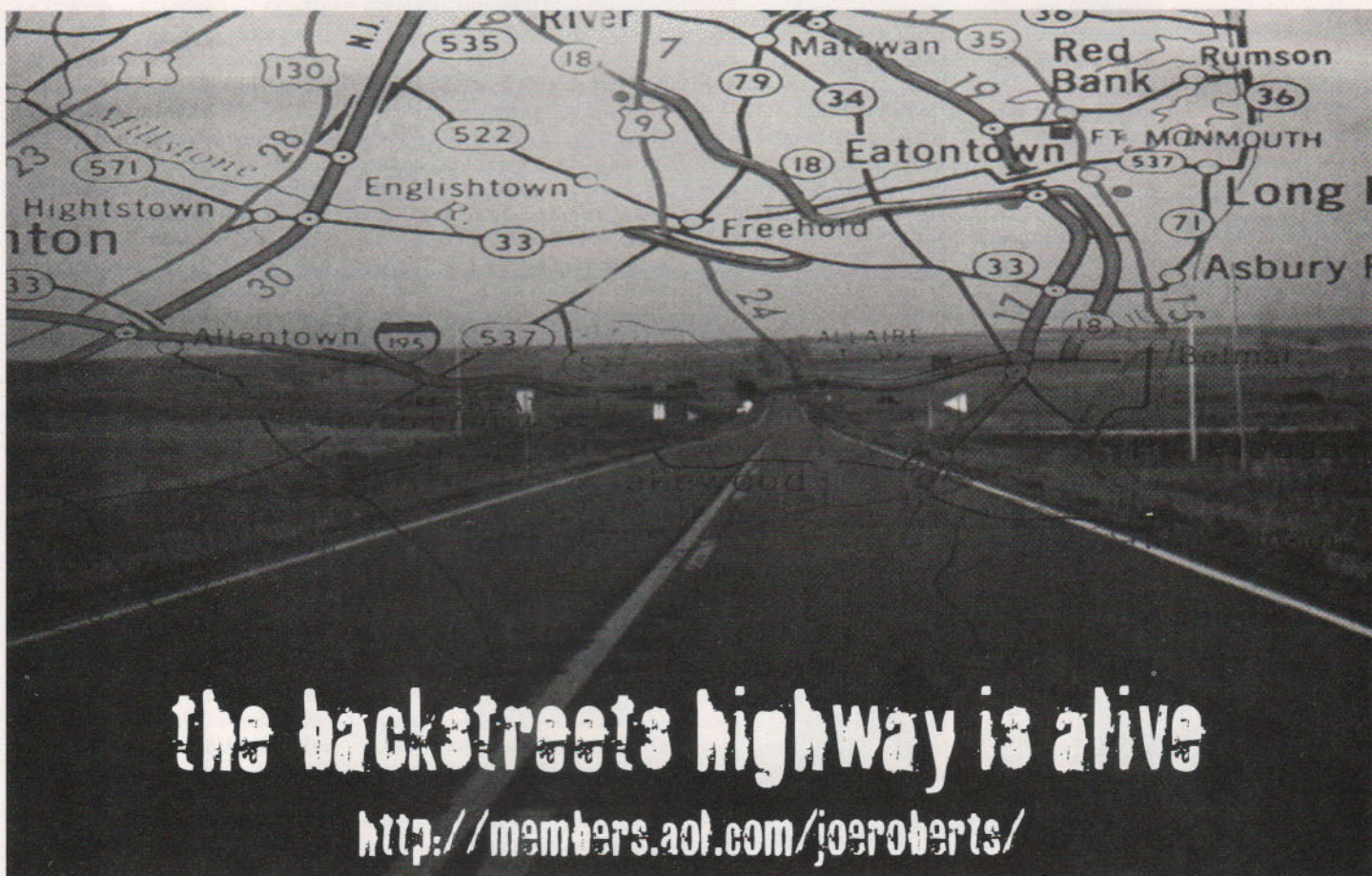
HUNGRY HEART 7" PIC DISC Also from the UK, shown above right, this 45 contains "Hungry Heart" as the a-side, with the Sony Studios take of "Streets of Philadelphia" on the other side. Nice sleeve, clear with blue and red type, includes a numbered insert card.....\$15

THE GHOST OF TOM JOAD LP US pressing.....\$16

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SLIPS

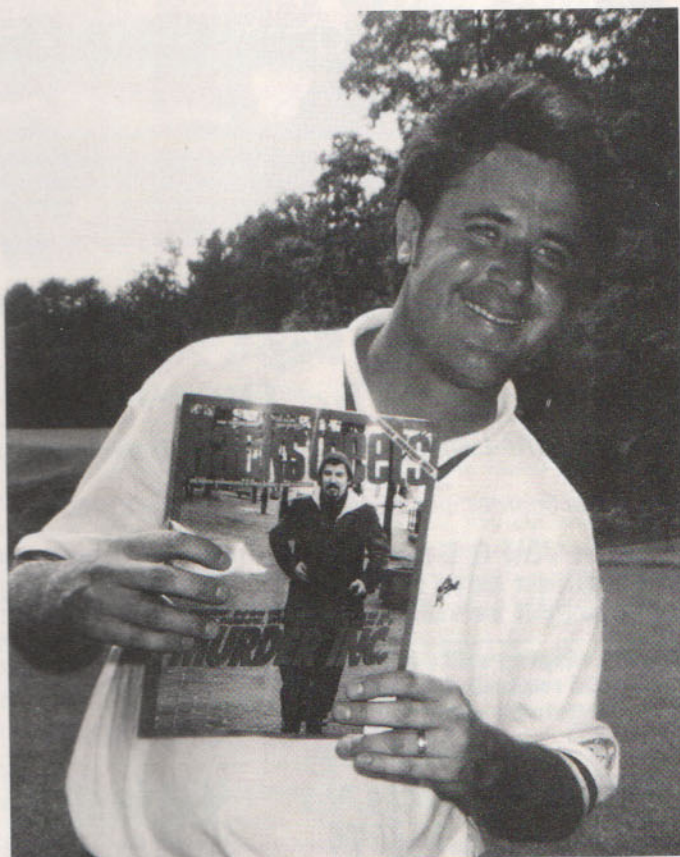
I'LL BE ON THAT HILL:

We've gotten reports of Bruce sightings all over New Jersey lately. Not in any club, though, or even on any stage—by late July Springsteen hadn't performed anywhere since the end of the European leg—but on billboards. With no surprise gigs to speak of, the Newark *Star-Ledger's* billboards were at least something to catch the eye of those on Bruce-watch. The newspaper's outdoor ads use a large shot of the local hero, circa '93, along with their "The Voice of New Jersey" slogan. . . . Springsteen is not only hovering over highways, he'll also be showing up in mailboxes. Well, in Gambia, anyway. Bruce is one of the artists included on a "History of Rock 'n' Roll" nine-stamp sheet, along with Roy Orbison, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Chuck Berry. This marks the the second time Bruce's likeness has appeared on a postage stamp—Grenada did it first. As far as we can tell, neither country took a young-Bruce vs. old-Bruce vote. . . . In its June 3 issue, *Life* magazine ranked the 50 most influential baby boomers, with Springsteen coming in at #18. The big 50 includes Steven Spielberg (#1), Bill Clinton (#3), and Matt Groening (#28) and lists Bruce as "a generation's unofficial poet laureate."

TIGER ROSE: Garry Tallent has produced the new record from legend Sonny Burgess for the Rounder label, and Bruce fans have an extra reason to check it out. In picking the tracks for the album, Tallent was able to include an unreleased Springsteen composition. Executive producer Dan Griffin told *Backstreets*, "Bruce gave us a nearly completed song called 'Tiger Rose.' A highlight of the sessions for me was walking into the stu-

dio and hearing Bruce's voice over Garry's answering machine reciting the just-finished lyric to Sonny, who was transcribing, while Garry picked out the chords on an acoustic guitar. The song is a rockabilly-flavored story-song. . . . Garry remembered playing on a demo and asked for the tune—and got it!" Tallent also recently played bass on Jim Lauderdale's new one, *Persimmons*. . . . Roy Bittan has produced the new album from the group disappear fear, titled *seed in the sabara*, on Rounder/Philo. Roy adds piano on "Love Don't Die." . . . Clarence Clemons is set to attend the Democratic National Convention in Chicago in August, as a delegate from California. The Big Man follows that up with a lecture tour, discussing "his astounding career, the music industry, and the electrifying reunion with Bruce and the E Street Band." Have a night with Mr. C. at the Learning Annex in Toronto on Sept. 25 (416-964-0011) and in New York on Sept. 26 (212-570-6500). We recommend raising your hand politely before asking any questions.

THE BRUCE FILES: A few new Springsteen books are hitting the shelves. *Rock Lives: Bruce Springsteen* comes off as somewhat of a quickie due to the number of errors. Still, the book is notable for its focus on the band's instruments and equipment as well as for some spectacular photos (though half of them are misidentified). . . . *The Complete Guide to the Music of Bruce Springsteen* is a CD-sized book by Patrick Humphries, author of *Blinded By the Light*. Like the other books in the *Complete Guide* series, this book looks at the officially released music, album by album and song by song. . . . *Songs in the Rough*, a new book edited by songwriter Stephen Bishop, collects handwritten drafts of over 70 rock 'n' roll songs, including two by Springsteen. "10th



Entertainer of the Year Vince Gill knows who's Boss.

Avenue Freeze-Out" is nearly identical to the final version, but of most interest is "Sometimes at Night," a draft of an unreleased and uncirculated song. As opposed to "10th Avenue," this one really is "in the rough," consisting at this point of two verses with several cross-outs; the lyrics, by the end, have the speaker escaping out a county hall window with a price on his head. . . . Coming in October is *Bruce Springsteen: The Rolling Stone Files*. Fourth in a series (including U2 and R.E.M.) of books that compile a chronology of interviews, articles, reviews, Random Notes—basically, everything on each artist that's appeared in *Rolling Stone* magazine over the years. The Springsteen collection should make a hell of a good read in all, but it's too bad that RS has had so little Tom Joad coverage—none, actually, other than an abbreviated album review in their year-end issue.

OTHER VOICES: At a stop on his recent solo tour Elvis Costello shed some light on his recent recording of Springsteen's "Brilliant Disguise." Costello's version was originally cut for a

demo tape of suggestions he offered to George Jones. When Jones said no thanks to all of it, Elvis made the song a B-side on his recent UK "It's Time" single. It's a keeper—too bad ol' George didn't see it that way. . . . Another brilliant songwriter with a penchant for good covers is Nanci Griffith. Rumor has it that Nanci will be covering Bruce for a second album of compositions by other songwriters, a follow-up to the acclaimed *Other Voices, Other Rooms*. No telling what the song will be, but word is that both Bruce and Patti will be joining her in the studio. . . . Tori Amos continues to cover "I'm on Fire" in concert, and her rendition was recently aired on a special VH1 broadcast, "VH1's Crossroads: Tori Amos." . . . For a more concentrated dose, look for Philly-area Bruce cover band Who's the Boss?, fronted by Mike Wurtele. Wurtele is the Bruce impersonator pictured meeting the real thing in *Backstreets* #50/51. We're told that he's actually fooled a few people (who of course would probably never admit it, so don't ask). For more information call the band's hotline at (215) 884-9470. 🐾



Back in the U.S.A.

Springsteen set for fall tour

Bruce Springsteen's fall tour of the United States has been announced. The upcoming U.S. leg begins 9/16 in Pittsburgh, PA, and runs through 12/14 in Charlotte, NC. Only cities not visited on the first leg are scheduled, leaving out such large population centers as New York, L.A., and Chicago (though there are dates not far from those cities). Most of the halls are theaters with capacities of 3,000 to 5,000, and several are on college campuses.

Springsteen also plays two benefit shows during the fall for special causes. On 9/29 he plays as part of the Woody Guthrie Tribute Concert at Severance Hall in Cleveland, Ohio, an event that ends a week long series of Guthrie remembrances organized by the Rock And Roll Hall of Fame and Museum and the Woody Guthrie Archives. On 10/26, Springsteen plays at San Jose State University in a benefit for the John Steinbeck Research Center.

According to the press release from Shore Fire Media, "on sale dates will be announced locally beginning later this month." Tickets for the Woody Guthrie Benefit will go on sale 8/17. ➔

9/16	Pittsburgh, PA	Benedum Center
9/18	Wallingford, CT	The New Oakdale Theatre
9/19	Providence, RI	Performing Arts Center
9/24	Kalamazoo, MI	Miller Auditorium
9/25	Akron, OH	E.J. Thomas Hall
9/26	Ann Arbor, MI	Hill Auditorium
9/29	Cleveland, OH	Woody Guthrie Benefit
10/1	Normal, IL	Braden Auditorium
10/2	Milwaukee, WI	Riverside Auditorium
10/3	Minneapolis, MI	Northrop Auditorium
10/15	Salt Lake City, UT	Abrael Hall
10/16-17	Denver, CO	Paramount Theatre
10/19	Albuquerque, NM	Kiva Auditorium
10/21	Tempe, AZ	Gammage Auditorium
10/22	San Diego, CA	Civic Theatre
10/23	Fresno, CA	Saroyan Theatre
10/25	Santa Barbara, CA	Arlington Theatre
10/26	San Jose, CA	John Steinbeck Benefit
10/28	Portland, OR	Schnitzer Auditorium
10/29	Seattle, WA	Paramount Theatre
11/12	Buffalo, NY	Shea's Performing Arts Center
11/13	Syracuse, NY	Landmark Theatre
11/14	Lowell, MA	Lowell Memorial Auditorium
11/19	Memphis, TN	Dixon-Meyers Hall
11/20	Louisville, KY	Palace Theatre
11/21	Indianapolis, IN	Murat Theatre
12/2-3	Miami, FL	Sunrise Auditorium
12/5	Columbia, SC	Township Auditorium
12/6	Birmingham, AL	Concert Hall
12/10	Cincinnati, OH	Music Hall
12/11	Columbus, OH	Veteran's Auditorium
12/12	Nashville, TN	Ryman Auditorium
12/14	Charlotte, NC	Ovens Auditorium

the backstreets jukebox

1. Bruce Springsteen
The Lost Masters, Vol. XXVII
Labour of Love (CD)

2. Steve Earle
Ain't Ever Satisfied
Hip-O (2CD)

3. Pete Dinklage
Necktie Second
American (CD)

4. Sleater-Kinney
Call the Doctor
Chainsaw (CD)

5. Jimmie Dale Gilmore
Braver Newer World
Elektra (CD)

6. The Melvins
Stag
Atlantic/Mammoth (CD)

7. Gillian Welch
Revival
Almo (CD)

8. Screaming Trees
Dust
Epic (CD)

9. Afghan Whigs
Black Love
Elektra (CD)

10. Rocket From the Crypt
Hot Charity
Perfect Sound (LP)

Backstreets nabs award

Backstreets magazine was the winner in the fanzine category at the 1996 Music Journalism Awards this spring in California. The awards honor top music journalists, and are part of the four day Music Journalism Awards and Conference.

The awards celebration took place at the Bel Age Hotel in West Hollywood on May 10. Hosted by comedian Richard Jeni, the awards also included such presenters as Devo's Mark Mothersbaugh and Moon Unit Zappa. The ceremony ended with a rare performance by Beach Boy Brian Wilson, who played a short set on piano.



At the ceremony, *Backstreets* Editor Charles R. Cross told the crowd that it was an honor to accept the award but that the real acceptance of *Backstreets* "comes from the subscribers who have supported this admittedly

strange venture for over 16 years now." The award itself is an etched glass round statue, shaped like a 10-inch EP.

The goal of the Music Journalism Awards is to honor and acknowledge the achievements and creativity of music journalists worldwide. Awards were given in 34 categories. The *Village Voice's* Ann Powers was voted Music Journalist of the Year, while the *New York Times's* Neil Strauss took second. In the fanzine category, other nominees were the Bob Dylan fanzine *On the Tracks*, from Colorado, and *ROCKRGRL*, the women-in-rock fanzine from Seattle. ➔

10
Monster
Discs to Play Today
and Everyday



New music from Shore artists

Back in Business on the Boardwalk

By Robert Makin

Recent music-related events in Asbury Park prove that the city is in a period of rock 'n' roll transition.

A couple of friendly old ghosts opened on the boardwalk this spring. Who better to bring them back than one-time Asbury Juke Tony Pallagrossi and his promotion/production company Swing Street Legend Entertainment?

"We're definitely looking into the future with this," Pallagrossi says. "This isn't just a summertime thing. We're going to be having concerts at Convention Hall throughout the year. I think it's definitely in the best future interest of Asbury Park."

One can't help thinking of Bruce Springsteen, particularly the song "4th of July, Asbury Park (Sandy)," while walking on the boardwalk, but the sounds blasting from its biggest concert venue have little to do with the blue-collar rock long associated with the seaside city.

Convention Hall reopened in late May with the alternative sounds of 311, No Doubt and Shootyz Groove. The Toadies, Butthole Surfers and Reverend Horton Heat were scheduled to play the hall on July 27. A reformed version of the seminal Jersey hardcore act, the Misfits (without Glenn Danzig) will take over the boardwalk on July 30 along with Anthrax and Life of Agony.

The closest thing to the classic sounds of Asbury Park on the boardwalk is King Crimson, who'll play Paramount Theatre on August 24.

Also showing the local scene's youthful vigor is the recently formed Jersey Shore Music and Arts Coalition. The brainchild of the Asbury Music Company, the folks who book the Saint and organize the Asbury Music Awards, the Coalition includes Cojack Productions, which mainly books the Brighton Bar in Long Branch. Several area coffee-

houses, musicians, poets, visual artists and local radio-folk are also involved.

The goal is to nurture and promote Jersey Shore acts, says Asbury Music Company's Peter Mantas, the one-time stage manager of Bon Jovi.

"I left in '87 and came back to see Asbury Park had turned into a freaking graveyard," Mantas says. "We're trying to create a little power behind our music scene. So many bands are better than what's on major labels. We want to help them out, because bands get exploited left and right. Some places make them sell tickets and if they don't do business, they get pushed out, good or bad. We're trying to keep it together and give a little dignity to rock 'n' roll."

"The Saint might not be the biggest or nicest place to play, but we treat people with respect," he adds. "It's a little oasis in the desert of rock 'n' roll."

The coalition meets monthly at Monmouth University in West Long Branch and holds benefits regularly at the Saint and the Brighton Bar. For more info, call (908) 776-8913.

As spring grew to a close, the Jersey Shore also got a boost from three local acts releasing major label debuts: Love in Reverse on Reprise, and Solution A.D. and Core, both on Atlantic. Meanwhile, the Saint hosted the 1996 Asbury Music Awards. Winners included Kitty in the Tree and their singer Orion Simprini (Best Pop Band/Top Male Vocalist), Danielle Kimack of Afterglow (Top Female Vocalist), Daniel Carter (Best Male Solo Artist), Heather Eatman (Best Female Solo Artist), and Mars Needs Women's "Superhero" (Song of the Year).

"The place was so packed, we're going to have it at the Paramount Theatre next year," Asbury Music Company's Scott Stamper says.

Who knows? Maybe Asbury Park will be the next Austin,

Texas, a scene that got itself off the ground with an annual awards show. Maybe we should ask Madame Marie.

Out-of-towners

Two Asbury scenesters from years gone by, Paul Whistler and James Deely, sent me material recently. Having settled in Oregon and California respectively, both performers are missed at the Jersey Shore, not only for their music, but also for their great sense of humor and passion for the local scene.



Whistler's passion for the blues, R&B and rock 'n' roll is the stuff of legend at the Jersey Shore. Along with his partner, Nora Michaels, he's captured that spirit beautifully on *Leopard Skin Music*, a 13-song collection of originals and covers that's got its mojo workin'.

It's great to hear the award-winning "How It Used to Be" committed to disc. A variety of solid Oregon players give a heavy treatment to the heart-wrenching tale of lost love.

Whistler does his own "Cadillac Ranch" with "Cadillac Back," a tribute to a time when the American Dream still was obtainable for anyone willing to work for it. If I can hang on this political tip for one moment longer, Michaels gives women's rights a shot in the arm with "Cleaning Woman Blues." The lyrics were written by her "cool biker mailman" after she shared a scary story about working in a San Francisco motel.

A sexy stab at putting the roll back in rock, *Leopard Skin's* on-

the-money covers include "Blues in the Night" by Johnny Mercer and Harold Allen, Little Willie John's "Need Your Love So Bad," and Leiber & Stoller's "Framed." Life is tough. Whistler and Michaels make an inspiring soundtrack.

Check it out by calling (800) 342-2148 or surfing the Leopard Skin Review website: <<http://www.teleport.com/~leo.shtml>>.

It's surprising to hear the free-spirited Deely singing about cold feet, but the serious-minded, piano-driven "Patrick's World" leads off his latest demo. A couple of songs later comes the Spanish-a-la-Nashville-flavored "Maria, I'll Marry You." Looks like playing my wedding six years ago has the boy thinkin'.

In between is "Custom Made," a fun-filled ditty about a hot rod, the kind that used to cruise the Asbury strip before failed development projects shut it down. A cross between surf rock and country twang, Deely can keep the friends he made in both Asbury Park and Nashville happy with this one. But the Jukes-inspired "Jersey Soul" lets folks know where his heart always will be even if his feet aren't there.

Deely's voice, which sounds more like Elvis than Bruce these days, is the best it's ever been. I hope his long-pursued rock 'n' roll dream is within reach. To request a copy of the tape, e-mail gposey@erols.com.

New Bandiera disc

Jukes' guitarist Bobby Bandiera has released his second solo CD, *Dog Loves You*. I haven't heard it yet, but word is that it includes a couple of Roy Orbison-like ballads, some Stonesey rave-ups, including a cover of their classic "Tell Me," and a moving tribute to Kurt Cobain.

Look for a review in the next column, but hey, don't wait for my opinion. If it's Bobby, you know it has to be good. Contact Under the Sun Productions at 5 Fiske Terrace, Cranford, NJ 07016. 🐾

Singing birds and talking dogs

A Chat With Bobby B

By Marty Ventura

Bobby Bandiera is one of New Jersey's most gifted working musicians and one of the best unsigned acts on the Shore today. Widely recognized as the lead guitarist for Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes, Bobby has also been a member of Dave Edmunds' touring band since 1990, and with the Bobby Bandiera Band he leads the Shore's hardest working outfit. *Bandiera*, Bobby's first solo album, released in 1991, was an eight-song relationship roller coaster ride through love, hate, fun, pain, dreams, and reality. You'll find all that and more on *Dog Loves You*, Bandiera's second solo album released in July. The ten-song album features both originals and a tremendous cover version of the Rolling Stones' "Tell Me (You're Coming Back to Me)." *Backstreets* spoke with Bandiera just prior to the release of *Dog Loves You* and touched on his time with Southside, the influence of Dave Edmunds, and the songs on his new album.

Backstreets: How did you come up with the title *Dog Loves You*?

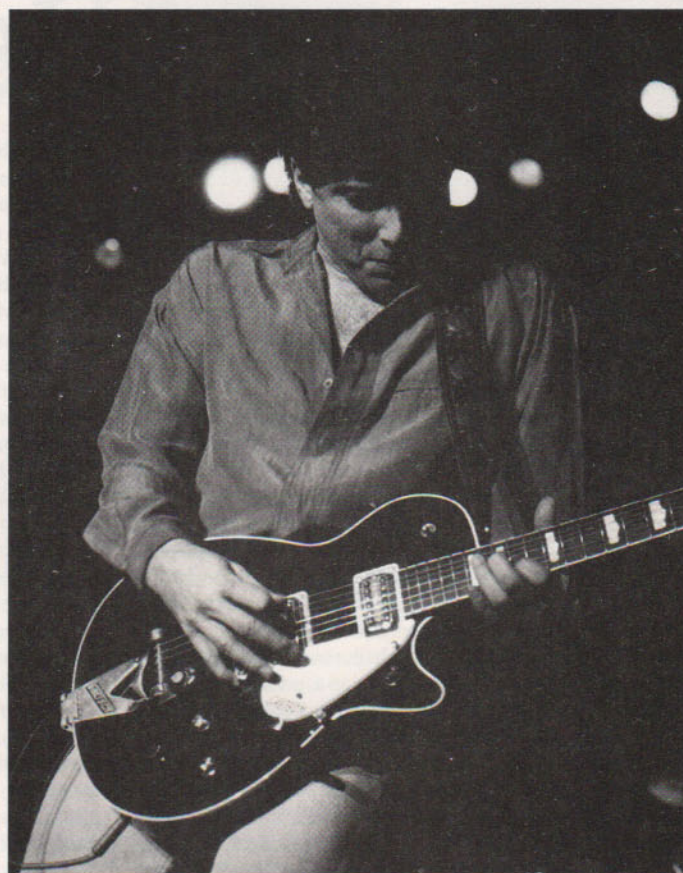
Bandiera: I can't tell you or people might think I'm nuts. I actually heard my dog say that to me. I leaned over, as he was licking my ear one day, and that's exactly what he said to me.

I believe you originally wrote "Rescue Me" from the new album for Dave Edmunds but then decided to put it on your album?

I wrote the song hoping that it would go on Dave's next record. I don't know where he is with it, but in the meantime I decided to go ahead and use it on my record because I like the song so much.

What musicians played on *Dog Loves You*?

I used Sean Pelton and Alan Dunn on drums, John Dryman on keyboards, Southside played harp, Barbara Barr and Pat



Guadagno sang background vocals, Joey Stann played saxophone, and I played guitar, bass, percussion and harp on one song. I had such a focus on what I wanted to hear, I wound up playing the bass and taking full control of the production with all these people coming in and out of the studio at different times.

Tell me about the song "Goodbye Blues," which features Southside on harp. I know the song has been around for a few years since it's been performed at some of your club gigs and even some Jukes shows.

I wrote "Goodbye Blues" maybe seven years ago. The funny thing is when Johnny and I write, it's kind of, I write the music and he writes the lyrics. This is one of the songs that I left for him to write lyrics to although he never got around to it. So I went ahead and wrote lyrics for it. I like it so much and

Johnny was not sure if the style of the song was something that was going to fit the next record for him either. So, like with the Dave Edmunds song, in the meantime I decided to go ahead and do it on my own.

Many people link you to the Jersey Shore music scene, yet your voice is most often likened to Roy Orbison. Songs like "Pardon Me" from the new album, and "Only in a Dream" and "World Stand Still" from your first album reflect an Orbison influence. How do you feel about this comparison and tell me about his impact?

He has been an influence on my life because my mother used to listen to him when I was growing up. I've always loved his songwriting, his voice, and the production on his records. I don't think I try intentionally to sing like him. When I was a kid I used to sing in a choir in grammar school and they used to tell me I

had a voice like a bird. I was afraid to find out what kind of bird they meant.

You recently visited Paris and London to perform as a solo act for the first time. How did this come about and how did you enjoy playing overseas?

I'd gone over with Southside in 1995 to do an acoustic tour and we started off at this place in Paris called the Chesterfield Cafe. It was a lot of fun—a small club packed every night, in the middle of Paris, in a great part of town. They just asked me if I would come over on my own to perform after seeing and knowing what I was doing with Johnny and individually. They realized that I could probably perform with a three piece band, which would be a minimal expense for them. So after talking, they went ahead to put the wheels in motion and they came up with me going over for two weeks to do this club in Paris. It was fun too—to think that somebody thought enough of how I performed and paid to have me come over and play their club in Paris! We wound up going up to London to do a show as well and that was a lot of fun too. Hopefully I'll be able to go back and expand a little bit more into a couple of additional countries such as Holland and Germany.

Dog Loves You contains one fabulous cover song: The Rolling Stones' "Tell Me (You're Coming Back to Me)." Why did you choose this?

Over the years you see what works in front of an audience when you're performing, from songs that you write to cover songs. "Tell Me" is just a song that I always liked and after working it up with the band it went over like gangbusters. There's a handful of songs that I'd like to record and cover, but we'll save them for a record down the road. 🐾

Marty Ventura is editor of *Under the Sun*, "the official voice of Bobby Bandiera news."

John Eddie

An Act of Faith

At the age of 15, feeling only unhappiness and boredom in his Richmond, Virginia, hometown, John Eddie packed his faith, his guitar, and his rock-star ambitions into a '57 Chevy and headed north to New Jersey in search of that ever-elusive place where he could "walk in the sun."

It is late one unusually cool spring evening when I meet the musician outside the studio where he is currently recording the material for his long-awaited third album due out later this year. As we walk ten blocks up Broadway to a coffee shop on Manhattan's Upper West Side, Eddie begins to recount the tales and emotions of the 22 years since his quest began. The prevailing sense I get from the singer-songwriter is a feeling of peacefulness and comfort, the kind

that comes from thoughtful understanding coupled with experience.

The realization and the recording of a new album has become a long and hard-fought process. Despite those trials,

today's John Eddie is confident about his work. He is currently shopping a tape of what he describes as "acoustic-based rock and roll demos" which were first recorded last year at Garry Tallent's studio in Nashville, Tennessee. The eventual record will include the tracks "The Man Upstairs," "Fall for It Every Time," and "Definitely." He says this is the closest he's ever come in the studio to capturing what he sounds like when he writes.

He recently spent six weeks in New York working on these demos and describes them as "really good, both in sound and," he adds only half-facetiously, "by their inherent wondrous nature." Though he is hoping for a major label deal, Eddie says he will put the record out independently if need be.

"It's an evil business. You make compromises all the time, there are no guarantees," Eddie says with a shrug. It is this lesson which has enabled him to survive as a musician. A lesson he first learned upon landing in New Jersey 22 years ago when his world consisted of nights at a \$10 roadside motor inn on Route 73 and days working at the Hess gas station across the street. Eddie remembers, with a crooked smile, how the girls at the Roy Rogers next door used to take pity on him and give him free food.

Though the life was sad and depressing, he stayed because it fit with the romantic visions in his head, and in turn, he couldn't help but think how great it would look on his bio.

It was 1974 and John Eddie had never heard of Bruce Springsteen. He was, however, a big fan of David Bowie, and remembers first hearing Springsteen's name when he read that Bowie was recording Springsteen's "It's Hard to Be a Saint in the City." Springsteen's name came up again, by way of Bowie, while Eddie was waiting in line to purchase tickets for Bowie's *Diamond Dogs* Tour, when he was offered a ticket to Springsteen's show at Camden Community College. On November 21, 1974, for the admission price of \$2, John Eddie found out exactly who Bruce Springsteen was, and as Eddie puts it, "I was converted."

The intangible magic of a Springsteen concert made Eddie see actual possibility in what to that point had only been a feeling, a dream. He saw, for the first time, that it was possible to create and perform dramatic music that was poetic while still being himself. Whereas Bowie seemed a character, some oddity from outer space, Bruce was real—a guy in jeans and a T-shirt, just like him.

In this enchanted state of recollection, Eddie tells of how he drew a picture of Springsteen and gave it to him at an early East Coast show. When I ask if this was the first time he met Springsteen, Eddie replies, "no," and takes the opportunity to relay a treasured meeting between the two. Eddie drove down to see Springsteen at the Tampa Jai Alai Fronton in 1975 when one of his sisters said, "that guy that you like is playing down here in Florida." Eddie recalls, "I was hanging out in the parking lot and Garry Tallent and Roy Bittan came over because I had this car, this '57 Chevy which was kind of a cool car to have at the time, and I took them to dinner. They wanted me to drive them someplace."

It's funny what one chooses to remember about events, and what Eddie remembers of this one is that he only had the *American Graffiti* soundtrack in his car and the two musicians thought that was cool. "I was a kid, and they were rock stars. They were doing what I wanted to do," he says.

After the show that evening, Eddie says, "Garry introduced me to Bruce and my car was parked way on the other side of the lot, and Bruce said, 'I understand you have a '57 Chevy.'" Eddie then recounts, with all the awe

By
Allison
Lux

and excitement as if it happened last week instead of 21 years ago, how he and Bruce walked across the parking lot of the Tampa Jai Alai Fronton at 3 a.m. to check out his '57 Chevy. When they got to the car Eddie said to Springsteen, "I'm going to be your successor, I'm going to have a band called the Front Street Runners and we're going to be your successors." Bruce started laughing.

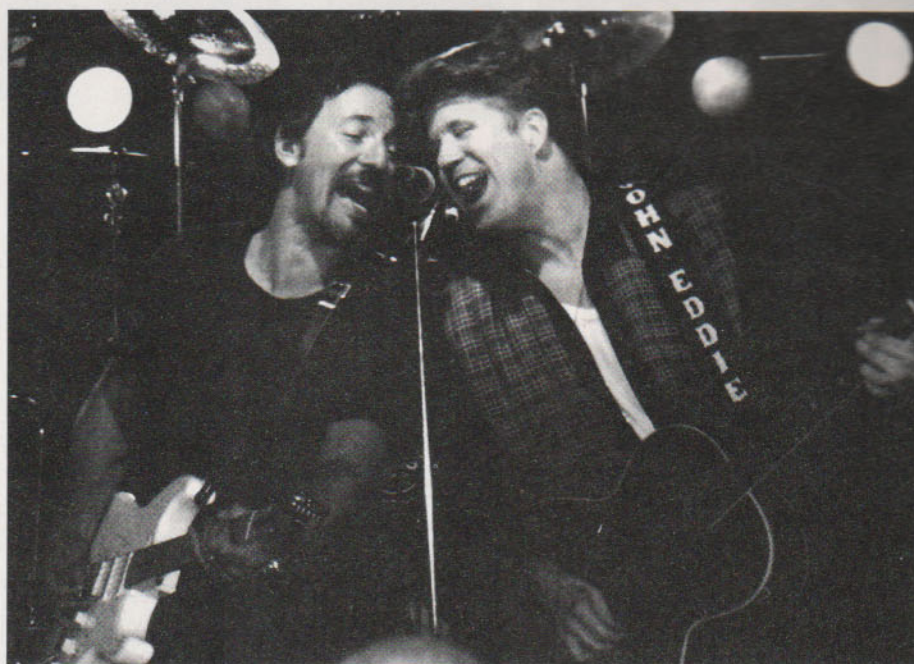
John then grabbed his old cassette box from the back seat and asked if Bruce would say good luck into the tape, but the problem was that the batteries kept falling out of the back. "Somewhere I have this tape of him all garbled I'm sure, saying 'good luck John,'" Eddie says. When I ask him whether Springsteen remembers the incident, Eddie replies matter of factly, "we never discussed it."

In 1984, ten years after his statement to Springsteen about becoming his successor, Eddie began to see the dangers of this goal which in his youth had been purely innocent. He also saw he could lose his own voice and his artistic freedom by being likened to another musician, especially one of Springsteen's stature. The fear of such a fate was the basis behind his eventual decision to sign with CBS Records. "I was doing music that had been influenced by Springsteen at a time when Bruce had just become the biggest star in the world. Everyone was looking for the next Bruce Springsteen, so somebody came up with the idea that it might be me. The guy who signed me was the first person that didn't say, 'oh you sound like Bruce,' so I saw that he saw something else in me," Eddie remembers.

Once on CBS Records, it took more than a year for Eddie to even begin recording an album because of haggling between artist and label over the band to be used on the record. While John wanted to remain loyal to his original backing band, The Front Street Runners, the label thought the group not good enough to record. Eventually the record company won.

True to his good luck/bad luck cycle, Eddie next met with better fortune by hiring then-President of Champion Entertainment, Tommy Motolla, as his manager. Motolla, who would go on to become President of CBS Records in 1988, supported Eddie's philosophy of going out and playing live night after night in order to promote a record. Following this theory through to its extreme, Motolla landed John Eddie the opening slot at Amnesty International's 1986 sold-out, nationally televised Giants Stadium show. For Eddie, whose debut record, propelled by the single "Jungle Boy," was about to enter the charts, this was a huge break. He would be opening for The Police and U2 to a capacity crowd of 75,000 in his virtual backyard. It was supposed to be one of those amazing life events for the musician when his real life would begin to exceed his dreams.

The week of the concert, Eddie came down with chicken pox, was in excruciating pain, had a 104-degree temperature, and was admitted to the hospital immediately following his performance. Eddie looks back disheartened and



American Style: Eddie with Springsteen at the Playpen, 10/21/94.

says, "You only get so many moments in life. That was a big moment for me, and I couldn't do what it is I do because I was deathly ill."


While performing and the whole rock star image were part of his initial quest, it is not his aspiration today. According to the musician, if he had his way he would sit in his house and write songs for other people to sing. Eddie describes music basically as just the means that he has chosen to express himself: "the main part is that I just really like words... the music and the records are really just a way to get the words out that are in my head." Had he finished high school and gone on to college, Eddie believes he would probably be what he calls a "regular" writer, but he writes songs because, he says, "I taught myself to do that and there's really no rules with that."

This passion for words which is the driving force behind Eddie's work actually ended up hurting him in regard to his second record, *The Hard Cold Truth*. Eddie describes the endeavor as "a disjointed album with songs started on drum machines, cut with the band and then replaced by drum machines. Very schizophrenic, four producers; it was just a project out of control."

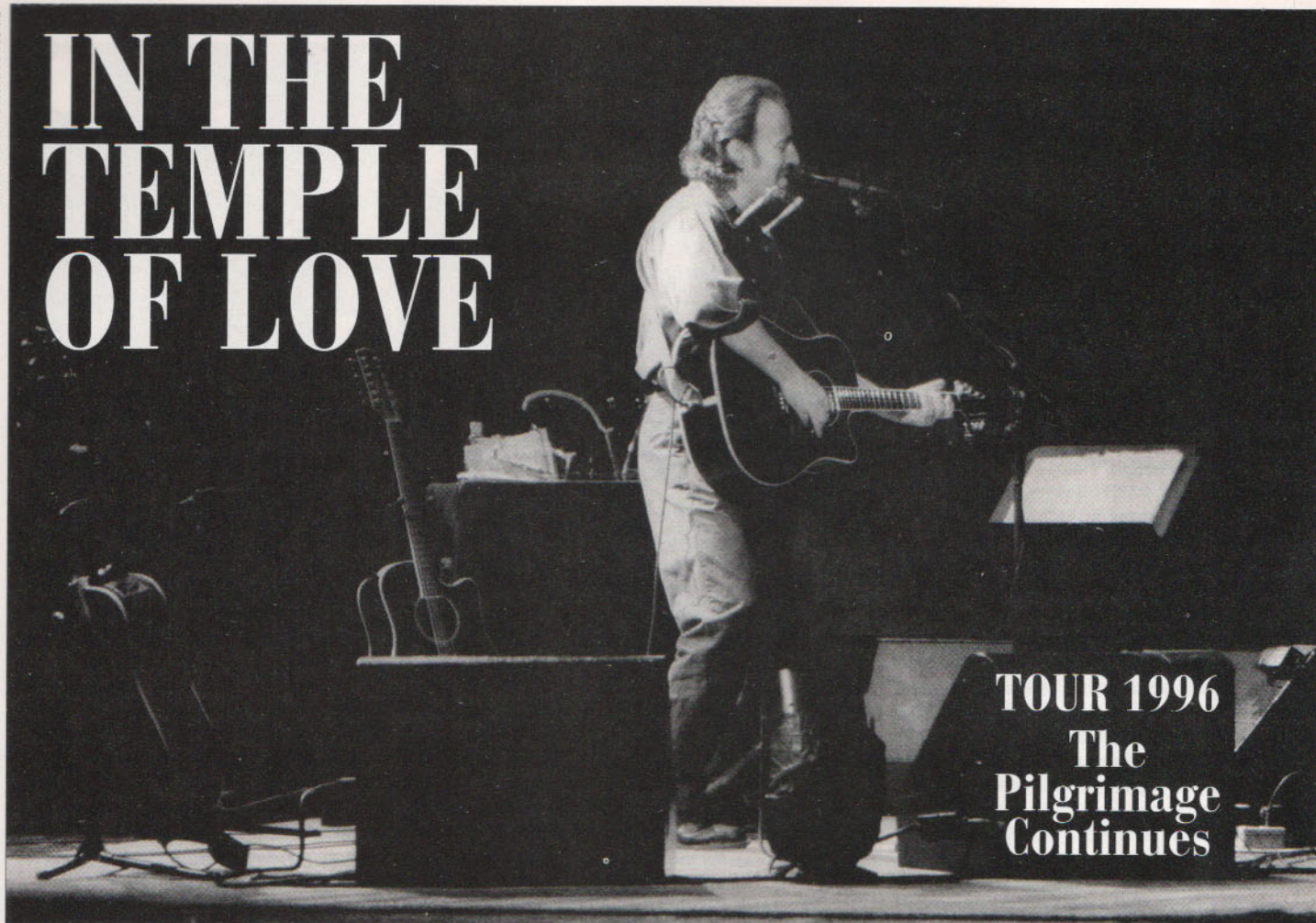
It's difficult to imagine how when something, such as making a record, is your sole focus and concern it can be allowed to unravel to the point of madness. For John Eddie the explanation is simple, it merely goes back to his passion for words. Never once did anyone involved with the album tell him he couldn't say something or ask him to change any of the words. When one sees words as crucial and powerful as John does, they think that the message is inherent no matter what surrounds it. The album ended up as a collection of songs ripe with Eddie's heartfelt lyrics battling erratic production that didn't seem to do the powerful tracks their justice.

It's been several years since *The Hard Cold Truth* and in that time Eddie has continued to hone his chops with numerous dates up and down the Eastern seaboard. In 1994 he hosted a series of weekly shows at Jersey Shore clubs known as the Lost American Thrill Show, giving him a chance to coordinate and play with a stellar lineup of musicians and friends—including the guy who wished him luck all those years ago. Within the last few months a Japanese reissue made his first album available again on CD.

Recently I ran into John at the Tradewinds nightclub in Sea Bright. He seemed very excited but also a bit wary when he tells me of a meeting he has scheduled the next week with an A&R Vice President from a major label. Indicative of his caution regarding the fickle nature of the industry, he quickly changed the subject and started to talk of plans to put together a band and resume playing live come September. Despite fears of jinxing himself by talking about the following week's meeting, Eddie returned to the topic until he was approached by a fan from Minnesota who told the musician he saw him perform ten years ago and has been listening since. I suppose, ultimately this is what it comes down to—moments like this that make you realize it's the music and not the music industry that really matters.

Passion is an act of faith, it's believing in something for no other reason than that's just the way you feel. Being true to one's passion can be a difficult path, but for some the thought of not following it is unbearable. This is the sense I get from John Eddie. With a new album on the horizon, John's journey continues onward, and though the past 22 years have been difficult and at times disappointing, proof of Eddie's character and musicianship lie in the fact that he remains true to the faith he took with him from Virginia at the age of 15. 

IN THE TEMPLE OF LOVE



TOUR 1996
The
Pilgrimage
Continues

4/10/96 ACCADEMIA DI SANTA CECILIA ROME, ITALY

4/10 SET: Tom Joad/Adam/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Johnny 99/Nebraska/Dead Man Walkin'/The Wish/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Spare Parts/Youngstown/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border/Bobby Jean/This Hard Land/Streets of Philadelphia/Galveston Bay/The Promised Land

4/10 SET NOTES: The last performance of "Dead Man Walkin'" in Europe.

PRESS: "A HERO OF OUR TIMES." *La Repubblica* (translated by Paolo Apostoli): ...The new Springsteen has come here alone to tell bitter and disagreeable truths.... It's a Dylan of

our times, determined to sing the new, though using the musical shapes of the folk song. He's an ancient minstrel, but driven to the challenges of the future by unexpected historical necessities:

at stake, he says, is the heritage we'll leave to our sons, and this is no joke. That's why it's a difficult concert, with few concessions except the smiles stolen between one song and another, and simple words, direct and ironic, by which Bruce takes the magic of music back to the experience of life.... A difficult concert, but with a deep, matchless fascination: few artists could bear the weight of a whole concert using only voice and guitar.... Springsteen weighs each word with dramatic intensity, and every little tone becomes highly significant, even the pauses and silences. The voice becomes substance, almost tangible, and all those things that were irremediably lost during those legendary rock marathons are now given back with interest.

MARCO'S COMMENTS: Bruce played an excellent venue, a classical music site where big symphonic orchestras would play. On the outside it's a big fascist-like building, built by Mussolini in the '30s; inside it's a small venue with red velvet seats and great acoustics.... The audience was overly enthusiastic, shaking with expectations. They did scream and yell during the entire concert, but were quiet during Bruce's slower songs and did not clap along. Lots of camera flashing, but it seemed not to annoy Bruce since he was constantly playing and singing with his eyes almost shut. This was the atmosphere, but it didn't spoil the concert.... I thought Bruce would be rusty after

stopping the tour in March, but he played and sang at his best. I really loved this concert because of the fine acoustics; I could hear every subtle chord he hit on the guitar and all understated words he sang. —Marco D'Elia

MASSIMO'S COMMENTS: In the audience was composer Ennio Morricone, whose "Once Upon a Time in the West" theme is played each night after the curtain. He was visibly having a good time, clapping along to "This Hard Land," which was introduced as a song about, among other things, "every Western movie I ever saw." Morricone left for backstage after the Oscar-winning "Streets of Philadelphia." (He never won an Oscar.)

Before the encores hundreds of fans rush to the stage. Five or six jump onstage to hug Bruce—after the first two he's pissed off and sends the others away. At every Italian concert fans will leave their seats and rush the stage, even crawling forward during the last verse of "Across the Border." —Massimo Benvegna

4/11/96 TEATRO SMERALDO MILAN, ITALY

4/11 SET: Tom Joad/Adam/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Murder Inc./Mansion on the Hill/If I Should Fall Behind/Little Things/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Spare Parts/Youngstown/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across



the Border//Bobby Jean/This Hard Land/Streets of Philadelphia//Galveston Bay/The Promised Land

4/11 SET NOTES: Same as 4/10 except for the four-song stretch after "Darkness," the segment of the show on this leg with by far the most variation. First performance of "If I Should Fall Behind" since Los Angeles, 11/26/95. The hardest ticket in Italy, with scalpers getting as much as \$800.

GIORGIO'S COMMENTS: "Highway 29" featured the first time I ever saw Bruce finger-picking, though he went back to his plastic pick for a louder sound when the keyboard came in. "Darkness" got everybody yahoos—me included, though I had promised myself not to. Milan witnessed the comeback of "If I Should Fall Behind," and we all cheered for a song that's been loved a lot in my country.

On "Dry Lightning" he stepped back from the mic during the final refrain so we all could hear his bare voice—that's an experience! At the end of "Across the Border" people ran to the stage and stayed there until the end—high moron factor, though they shut up during songs. —*Giorgio Malucelli*

PAOLO'S COMMENTS: Just after the first song, Bruce remembered when he first came to Milan, back in 1985, at San Siro stadium (70,000 people), saying that "this place is a little bit smaller, but it's nice to be here." "Darkness" was absolutely devastating, and so were "Murder Inc." and an unbelievable "BUSA." Introducing "Little Things," Bruce explained that it was about man-woman relationships, love and sex, and said in Italian, "Molto difficile, ma necessario" (very hard, but necessary), which brought great laughter from the audience. "Dry Lightning" was introduced as "another song about spare parts."

The crowd was very diligent in satisfying Bruce's request for silence, attention and collaboration, but only for the first part of the show: in fact, just a few seconds after the end of "Across the Border" a group of stupid people rushed to the stage and started clapping, forcing everybody else to get up and breaking the magic of an unforgettable moment. Didn't they know the kind of show they were going to attend? I had the feeling that after this Bruce lost some of his good mood. —*Paolo Apostoli*



**4/13/96
TEATRO
CARLO
FELICE
GENOA,
ITALY**

4/13 SET: Tom Joad/ Adam/ Straight Time/ Highway 29/

Darkness/Johnny 99/Nebraska/Little Things/ Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Spare Parts/Youngstown/ Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Bobby Jean/This Hard Land/No Surrender//Galveston Bay/The Promised Land

MARCO'S COMMENTS: Genoa's concert was somehow less focused than Rome and

Milan. The audience was made mostly of all the people who couldn't get in the other two venues. If Rome was spectacular but too warm (e.g. idiots jumping on stage to embrace Bruce during the encores), if Milan was the most focused and inspired, Genoa's concert was like Saturday evening after a week of work. Nice, well done, happy, without any problems but without any real highlights. Pure talent and craftsmanship, but no great display of it. Even the setting was somehow colorless.... —*Marco D'Elia*

MASSIMO'S COMMENTS: Bruce led the audience chant for the last chorus of "No Surrender," the highlight of the night. Before "Galveston Bay" he thanked the Italian audience for its support and for having listened in silence to this "difficult music," while hundreds of fans are standing and screaming in front of him. A little irony? Obviously, the ghost of Bruce's past is still haunting him; in Italy, at least, his "fans" are always reminding him. So add "if you can't beat them, join them" to "My Best Was Never Good Enough"... —*Massimo Benvegna*

4/16-17/96 ROYAL ALBERT HALL LONDON, ENGLAND

4/16 SET: Tom Joad/Adam/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Murder Inc./ Nebraska/Pilgrim in the Temple of Love/My Best/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Spare Parts/Youngstown/ Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Bobby Jean/This Hard Land/No Surrender//Galveston Bay/The Promised Land

4/16 SET NOTES: "My Best," which hasn't been performed since February, appears in the main set for the first time. Bruce also plays a world premiere, "Pilgrim in the Temple of Love," AKA "Santa Gets a Blowjob."

PRESS: "HALLELUJAH! THE BOSS IS BORN AGAIN." Max Bell in the *Evening Standard*: Thirty years ago Bob Dylan went electric in the Albert Hall and was called Judas. Last night Bruce Springsteen played a solo acoustic show and was heralded as a savior.

With Bruce strapped to his orthodontic harmonic frame and puffing like a grampus, any residual cynicism faded away. Sure, there were longeurs in the second half but these were punctuated by "Pilgrim in the Temple of Love"—in which a roadhouse Santa enjoys oral sex—and the slide guitarfest of "Born in the USA," now sounding like the ultimate outtake from *Apocalypse Now*.

The coming of age songs towards the finale, where he sang about fatherhood, had special resonance, as did his trademark showbiz techniques—singing slightly off microphone dur-



ing the key lines in "Across the Border" and "Streets of Philadelphia."

To divulge much more would be akin to ruining the plot of a fabulous movie. Suffice it to say that Sergio Leone would have approved. Once upon a time in America.

NEIL'S COMMENTS: A new song for London, which Bruce claimed came straight from his diary—if he kept one. It was about visiting a guy in a Santa Claus suit getting a blowjob in the back of a Mazda, worshipping the showgirl onstage, being recognized by the owner as the first big star to frequent the bar and seeing Santa's sleigh fly off over the freeway as he went home—accompanied by sleigh bells and "ho ho ho's" from offstage.

Bruce was in good form and did not give the usual speech about "shutting the fuck up" at the beginning. Toward the end of the main set he commented that this was the point at which the Italians had started stage diving! —*Neil Manthorpe*

4/17 SET: Tom Joad/Adam/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Johnny 99/ Mansion on the Hill/The Wish/Little Things/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Spare Parts/Youngstown/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Does This Bus Stop/This Hard Land/Streets of Philadelphia//Galveston Bay/The Promised Land

4/17 SET NOTES: In place of "the speech" Bruce tells the crowd that the night before it was "so quiet it gave me the creeps."

PRESS: "STEEN: AGED FANCLUB." Keith Cameron in *New Musical Express*: ...No show based around *The Ghost of Tom Joad* is going to have the dressing-room mice polka-ing up and down the cheeseboard. Yet, Springsteen's sureness of touch with this material means that he can shift the tone of proceedings dramatically, without tarnishing its essential premise. Thus he makes merry during a lengthy discourse on the topic of children—"I always considered them aggravating little bastards until I had my own. They're still aggravating little bastards, but they're mine!"—before easing into "Balboa Park," a song about Mexican border kids who fall into cycles of abuse thanks to the economic imperatives of their lives.

His manner is easy, as you would expect from a man who, as he continually points out, has been playing music to people for 30 years. Yet his between-song preambles betray a cute way with comedy. Mothers are up for discussion at one point, and eventually he gets to our own Queen Mum. "As Saddam Hussein would no doubt say, she's the mother of all mothers." Though clearly rehearsed, in as much as he's been doing them night after night, these are not the utterances of a jaded star, treadmilling his way to the next tax return, nor are his breathtaking treatments of some of his most familiar old nuggets the get-out clause of an old rocker short-changing his punters.

Springsteen sandblasts "Darkness on the Edge of Town," his acoustic amplified so it sounds like a battalion of Bruces, struggling with the song's elemental power....

BRUCE'S GHOST STORIES

INTRO TO "THE LINE" (2/21/96 PARIS, FRANCE)

When I was a kid growing up, my Dad was a Western freak. All he'd watch was Westerns on television. Which was okay, except on Sunday night—there was a show called Ed Sullivan that had all the rock bands on. And he wanted to watch *Bonanza*! Oh—you get *Bonanza* over here. I'm sorry about that. So you know what I mean when I say all my life I've hated Loren Greene?

But then I got a little older and I became a Western freak! So Freud, wherever he is, he's tap dancing on his grave. That father/son thing. But I was always interested in the sheriff, what it was like on that side of the law. A lot of rock music was interested in outlaws, but I was always partly interested in what it would be like to be the sheriff.

This is a song that's set at the San Diego border station, and it's about how a lot of young border patrolmen get out of the Army and they go to work for the INS. And it's a confusing job.

There's a Mexican writer, Carlos Fuentes, who said that California was Mexico until 1848. And that the border is really just a scar. It's hard to know where the line really is.

I got my discharge from Fort Irwin

Took a place on the San Diego county line...

INTRO TO "LITTLE THINGS" (12/5/95 WASHINGTON, D.C.)

This is the part of the show where I like to regale the crowd with tales of my life and loves. Yeah, on the the nights that my wife isn't here.... But I was in a city that shall remain nameless, and I was going to visit some friends of mine. They lived a little ways off across the bridge and I left about an hour to get there and it should have been plenty of time, and I get on the bridge and I'm traveling and I'm hitting hellacious traffic. And I realize that I'm probably going to be an hour late.

So I pull off the nearest exit and I end up in this sort of industrial area where I don't see anything open, and I drive a few blocks and there's this little bar on the corner. So I pull over—I'm in my folks' Cadillac—I pull over and I run in the bar and I'm going to make a phone call, trying to be courteous and tell him I'm going to be late. And all I got's a twenty dollar bill.

So there's a few people in the joint, and I go up to the bartender and say, "I need to make a phone call, can you give me change?"

And he says, "Well, we don't give any change around here."

I didn't know if he meant, like, in the bar, or if the whole community had taken on this issue to simply not give any more change: "We've had it! We're not giving any change! God damn it! Fuck 'em!"

I didn't have time to do a door to door survey and check it out, so I just stood there with a twenty in my hand and a dumb look on my face. Meanwhile, sort of off in the corner of my eye there's a waitress. And she doesn't say anything, she just kind of saunters over and goes like this... and holds up a quarter in her hand.

I say, "thank you" and go over to the pay phone. I put the money in the phone and I realize that I'm obviously making a call that's just slightly out of the area code. And so I look at her and I say, "Gee, you know, I think it's gonna cost fifty cents."

And she just looks at me and says, "Oh, that's too bad."

She says, "but I'll give you another quarter if you give me a ride home."

So... I say, "Okay!"

And all of this took place a very, very long time ago.

And this is called "Little Things That Count."

She said we could just sleep together, there'd be nothin' wrong...

INTRO TO "ACROSS THE BORDER" (3/20/96 DUBLIN, IRELAND)

When I was 26, 27 years old, a friend of mine showed me a film, John Ford's *Grapes of Wrath*. And I remember sittin' there when it was done and thinkin', yeah, that's what I want to do. You always hope that you'll be able to do work that'll mean something, and that was a picture that resonated throughout the whole rest of my life. I always go back to it, I think, because it asks a real fundamental question that we sort of answer by the choices we make everyday—by the things that we do. The film and the novel, the Steinbeck novel, I think, ask the question: Are we all individual souls, and is there such a thing as independent salvation? Can you really in the end just save yourself, or are we connected in some fashion? And do we sort of rise and fall—at least in spirit—as one? That seems to be the question.

There's a scene at the end of the movie: Tom Joad's killed a security guard that's killed his friend and he knows he's going to have to leave his family. And he's going to have to tell his mother that after she's come thousands of miles and they've left their home and they've lost their home and they've lost family members and they don't know what tomorrow's going to bring... he's going to have to tell her that now she's going to have to lose her son.

That scene is set up by another scene that's a dance in this work camp, and it's just very lovely—the faces, the music. I always thought it was Ford sort of holding out possibility of beauty even in a very brutal, brutal world. Because when there's beauty, there's hope; and when there's hope, there's divine love (or whatever you want to call it).

So after the dance, Tom slips into his mother's tent and he touches her very gently and wakes her up and says, "Mama, I've got to go now." And they step out underneath these trees, and she says, "Well, Tommy, I knew this day was going to come, but how am I going to know how you are? How am I going to know where you are? How am I going to know if you're alright? If you're alive? How will I ever see you?"

And he says, "Well, all I know is I gotta go out, and I gotta knock around, I gotta see what's wrong, and I gotta see if there's something I can do about it to make it right. And you'll see me, Mama, because at night I'll be in the darkness that surrounds you when you're sleeping. And you'll hear me in men's voices when they're yelling 'cause they're angry and when they're happy 'cause they found work. You'll hear me in the way that kids sound when they come in and they know that there's food on the table and that they're safe. That they're safe... you'll see me, Mama."

And he disappears off into the darkness.

And the next scene is the Joads heading up north looking for work and the father says, "Well, we lost Tommy, now what are we going to do?" And Ma just says, "Well, we're going to keep on going."

So this is a song I guess about that mystery. How people hold that faith... how they hold that hope no matter what. Not because they have to.

Tonight my bag is packed...



DAVID DUBOIS PHOTO



SPRINGSTEEN SALUTES THE CROWD IN MILAN, 4/11/96.

He will bow out with "The Promised Land," smearing unearthly fear over its coda with a weird, tremulous operatic wail. Together with the preceding "Streets of Philadelphia," sung away from the mic, he can rarely have rendered anything with more heart.

4/19/96 INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS CENTRUM BERLIN, GERMANY

4/19 SET: Tom Joad/Adam/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Murder Inc./Nebraska/Little Things/Sell It/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Spare Parts/Youngstown/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Bobby Jean/This Hard Land/Streets of Philadelphia//Galveston Bay/The Promised Land

4/19 SET NOTES: The show was taped for radio broadcast, and was later aired (though not in its entirety). Three tracks turned up on the European "Missing" single.

PRESS: "WHEN ENTHUSIASM ARISES FROM RESPECT." Uwe Sauerwin in *Berliner Morgenpost* (translated by Frank Schurmann): Musically, this experienced rock 'n' roller is moving on unsafe ground. At the beginning he celebrates the pop-posing image and hits the

12-string that knocks the audience almost out of their chairs. Then, in a cautious and almost shy way, he is testing his new partner—the audience. And he is able, even at the ICC, to create an intimate setting. He tells simple, funny stories about love, TV commercials, etc. and this man's concert—which used to rock whole stadium audiences—turns out to be an almost contemplative evening. Unfortunately, it also reveals that Bruce Springsteen with only his guitar hits the limits of his songwriting abilities. Although it is admirable how he is able to describe a whole destiny with only two or three laconic lines, carrying melodies are rare and the early Dylan sounds through too often instead. The enthusiasm at the end then arises mainly out of respect for an artist who has the courage to break with his image and to tread new paths even if he meets with the disapproval of some of his fans.

RALF'S COMMENTS: The ICC is a pretty modern building where Bruce played before back in '81. Similar to the Hamburg venue but bigger—a 5000 capacity. For me personally, this was the best of all the six German shows I saw. But other people were a bit disappointed that the set list was so similar to the February shows. The stories were very similar. There were a few slight differences in playing and

singing since the February shows. Especially the songs with more emphasis on the guitar playing seemed to be more improved. —Ralf Dissmann

FRANK'S COMMENTS: After his introduction to "Sell It," Bruce didn't want to play the song because it seemed to him that the audience did not get the story. He finally played the song after the crowd asked for it. The audience could not relate to the five-song "Border Suite" although it is the centerpiece of the show. —Frank Schurmann

4/20/96 Q. E. HALLE ANTWERP, BELGIUM

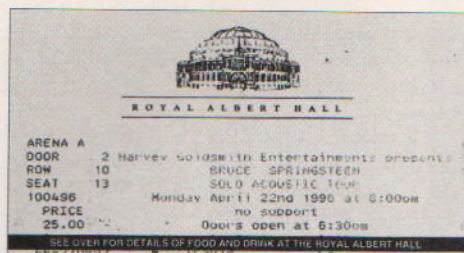
4/20 SET: Tom Joad/Adam/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Johnny 99/Mansion on the Hill/Pilgrim in the Temple of Love/Little Things/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Spare Parts/Youngstown/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Bobby Jean/This Hard Land/Streets of Philadelphia//Galveston Bay/The Promised Land

4/20 SET NOTES: "Nebraska" is on the set list but not played; "Mansion" takes its place. "Pilgrim," not on the set list, is played in response to an audience request.

PRESS: "BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN ISN'T A BORING FOLKIE." Stef Vanwoensel in *Gazet van Antwerpen* (translated by Erik van Roovert): By what do you recognize the skill of a rock artist? After a two-and-a-half hour Bruce Springsteen concert in the Antwerp Queen Elisabeth Theater we thought: by the fact that he succeeds in giving the audience the feeling he's doing this only for them, even in the middle of a long tour...

PETER'S COMMENTS: Bruce was very relaxed and in a very good mood. After the first song he said in Flemish, "Hoe is't Alles Goed?" ("How do you do? Everything's fine?"). This broke the ice, and Bruce got a lot of response from the crowd—not annoying or moronic, but very funny, and Bruce seemed to be looking for responses. He had lightened up a lot since Paris. —Peter Inghelbrecht

Ghost	Dry
Adam	Spare
Straight	Youngstown
29	Sinaloa
Darkness	Line
J. 99	Balboa
Nebraska	Border
Little Things	Bobby Jean
Brothers	Hard
USA	Spare Parts
	GAT
	Dreams & Land



4/22/96 ROYAL ALBERT HALL LONDON, ENGLAND

4/22 SET: Tom Joad/Adam/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Johnny 99/Nebraska/Sell It/The Angel/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Spare Parts/Youngstown/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Blinded By the Light/This Hard Land/Streets of Philadelphia//Galveston Bay/The Promised Land

4/22 SET NOTES: First ever live performance of "The Angel."

MORON FACTOR: The crowd was quiet during the songs, but constantly screaming out requests in between. At one point a guy stood up and shouted, "Hey Bruce! I fuckin' love you!" Bruce said this guy was following him, and—at least at the next few shows—this seems to be the case.

JEFF'S COMMENTS: The performance of "The Angel" was obviously a shocker. What I found interesting is that I don't think half the hall recognized the song. Bruce introduced it as a song he hasn't played since he was 24. I was also thrilled to hear him perform "Blinded." It was very funny watching him struggle through the lyrics and when his guitar string broke he had to switch mid-song and retune the other guitar, and then continue the chorus. —Jeff Jackel

4/24-25/96 BRIXTON ACADEMY LONDON, ENGLAND

4/24 SET: Tom Joad/Atlantic City/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/State Trooper/Mansion on the Hill/Pilgrim in the Temple of Love/Red Headed Woman/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Seeds/Youngstown/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Bobby Jean/This Hard Land/Streets of Philadelphia//Galveston Bay/The Promised Land

4/24 SET NOTES: Tour premiere of "Atlantic City," "Red Headed Woman," and "Seeds." "State Trooper" was played for the only time on this tour besides Dallas, 1/26. Soundcheck included "You Can Look," "Atlantic City," "Red Headed Woman," and "Point Blank."

MORON FACTOR: Extremely high. As just one example, during the intro to "Youngstown" an audience member yells, "You said that on December 27th!"

SALLY'S COMMENTS: The crowd was appalling. Compared with Manchester and Birmingham, where you could hear a pin drop and people were on the whole very still, here folks were up and down out of their seats all

night. Between songs, during songs, whenever. The reason: the bar remained open, of course. So anyone seated near the exits or at the back of the hall was treated to doors opening and shutting, a stream of people past their seat and the noise filtering through from the bar. Very distracting and irritating, especially during Bruce's quiet monologues.

There were also plenty of knuckleheads in attendance: "Play 'Born to Run,' Brooce!"; "Ah, shuddup, get on with it"; etc. However, some of these led to some of the most entertaining parts of the evening. As the set list shows, it was a great show with a couple of debuts and changes. Bruce obviously recognized the need to switch things around a little during his London stand.

"Atlantic City" was a pretty straightforward arrangement. He started to strum the chords while he did his "shut up and no flashlights" speech (the latter blatantly ignored all night) and I was thrilled when he did indeed launch into it rather than "Adam."

Someone came to the front of the stage and handed Bruce a bottle of tequila. "Jesus Christ, man, sit down will ya?" Bruce exclaimed, sounding a little exasperated.

"State Trooper" was simply stunning, the highlight of the night for me. Great guitar and very intense performance. After this, one of the aforementioned bozos a few rows in front of me yelled, "Oi! Bruce! I fuckin' love you!" to much laughter. Bruce: "Ah, you've been followin' me. I've seen you. The 'fookin' luv ya' man. At night I pray they don't let him into the States." Audience cracks up. After this, things started to get a bit lively....

He followed "Pilgrim" with a very lascivious "Red Headed Woman," playing guitar one-handed and gesturing to the audience with the other, practically growling out the verses. The lyrics changed considerably too, the verse about having your "tires rotated" being dropped and replaced with: "When push comes to shove and shove comes to push/I was like Moses kneeling before the burning bush."

While Bruce was changing guitars a woman climbed up onto the stage and surprised him when he turned around. She whispered in his ear and he then signed an autograph for her, as taken aback as the rest of us that she'd had the nerve and not been stopped by any bouncers! Big Terry came busting on but wasn't needed. "I don't quite know what to say about that—

your husband must be a lucky man!" laughed Bruce. I think she got one of the biggest rounds of applause of the night. —Sally Parker

4/25 SET: Tom Joad/Atlantic City/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Johnny 99/Highway Patrolman/The Wish/If I Should Fall Behind/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Spare Parts/Point Blank/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Does This Bus Stop/This Hard Land/No Surrender//Galveston Bay/The Promised Land//Blowin' Down the Road

4/25 SET NOTES: The tour premiere of "Highway Patrolman." First performance of "Point Blank" since Red Bank, 11/22/95. First show of the tour to leave out "Youngstown." "Blowin' Down the Road" featured guests Joe Grushecky on guitar and Elliott Murphy on harmonica.

MORON FACTOR: Again, extremely high. A quieter crowd in general than the night before, but with some outstanding exceptions: During "Galveston Bay," for instance, after Springsteen sang the "My friend, you're a dead man" line, one audience member applauded the lyric loudly, yelling something along the lines of "Hitler was right." Bruce kept going, but as soon as the song was over he responded, "Oh, just for the record, the guy that applauded in the first spot, you got it all fuckin' wrong."

JOHN'S COMMENTS: The "Bruce, I fuckin' love you" guy was there both nights. Still, two brilliant shows more than made up for the annoyance of two lousy audiences. Highlights for me included the bemused look on Bruce's face when he turned around to see the girl on stage on the first night, and the stuffed animal on stage the second night—"Just what a 46-year-old man needs!" —John Deacon

4/27/96 ROYAL ALBERT HALL LONDON, ENGLAND

4/27 SET: Pony Boy/Tom Joad/Atlantic City/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Johnny 99/Highway Patrolman/The Wish/Adam Raised a Cain/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Spare Parts/Point Blank/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Blinded by the Light/This Hard Land/Streets of Philadelphia//Galveston Bay/The Promised Land

4/27 SET NOTES: Tour debut of "Pony Boy," and the first show to start with a song other than "Tom Joad." The first appearance of "Adam Raised a Cain" outside the second position, prompted by an audience member asking for a song about Springsteen's father following "The Wish." Elliott Murphy and Joe Grushecky were in the audience but did not join Bruce onstage. Soundcheck included "Atlantic City," "My Father's House" and "I Wish I Were Blind."

NEIL'S COMMENTS: We'd been spoiled so far, and this night was another excellent performance. The quiet audience livened up for the encores and stood throughout—though Bruce's attempted sing-along on "Blinded" was unsuccessful. Well, we didn't have the Tele-Prompter! "Blinded" was word-perfect, though, with no guitar problems. —Neil Manthorpe



**4/30/96
PALAIS DE LA MUSIQUE
AT DES CONGRES
STRASBOURG, FRANCE**

OLIVER'S COMMENTS: The best part was after the show, when we waited with about 80 other fans for Bruce to come out. Finally he drove by in a van and we all thought he would just wave and leave, but then he came out of the car and installed himself on top of it and started signing autographs. —*Oliver Bittner*

**5/1/96
PALAIS VAN SCHONE KUNSTEN
BRUSSELS, BELGIUM**

5/1 SET NOTES: "The Wish" was on the set list but was replaced by "Red Headed Woman."



**5/2/96
KONGRESSHAUS
ZURICH,
SWITZERLAND**

MARKUS'S COMMENTS: Bruce introduced "Red Headed Woman" as a song with some yodeling in it, saying, "I think this is the country

CHRISTIAN'S COMMENTS: While introducing the song "Across the Border," Bruce said "Tom Jones" instead of "Tom Joad." He didn't notice at first and kept on talking, but after a while he stopped and asked, "Did I just say 'Tom Jones'?" We said yes, and he shook his head and said, "That's the one who sang 'What's New, Pussycat'?" Everybody laughed and Bruce went back to his introduction. His last words before "Across the Border" were: "This is a song about, once everything is gone, you can still carry on if you've got dreams, faith, love... and Tom Jones records, of course." —*Christian Fridell*



5/6-7/96
TEATRE TIVOLI
BARCELONA, SPAIN

JAN'S COMMENTS: The sound was better than yesterday; again, the loud songs ("Johnny 99," etc.) were the highlights. But the important part of the show was the first encore set. There was an unbelievable rushing of the stage. And Bruce catered to the masses, giving them what they wanted starting with "This Hard Land," and then "No Surrender," and then "Bobby Jean." Creating an atmosphere for everybody to join in, clap, wave flags, etc. If he wants to get the crowd going, then he should fly over the E Street Band, do one hour of *Tom*

Joad and then rock for the rest of the show. Bruce lost sight of the concept of the show and turned it into a crowd-pleasing show. In short I did not like this very much (though most of the Spanish crowd did). —Jan Rodenrijs



5/8/96 PALACIO DE CONGRESOS Y EXPOSICIONES MADRID, SPAIN

5/8 SET: Tom Joad/Adam Raised a Cain/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Johnny 99/Nebraska/Pilgrim in the Temple of Love/Red Headed Woman/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Spare Parts/Youngstown/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border/Bobby Jean/This Hard Land/No Surrender/Galveston Bay/The Promised Land

5/8 SET NOTES: Same as 5/6 except played "Pilgrim in the Temple of Love" instead of "If I Should Fall Behind." Before the concert Spanish channel TV2 conducted an interview with Springsteen onstage which was broadcast as part of "Vibraciones: Especial Bruce Springsteen." The program included uncut footage of the first three songs of the Madrid concert, plus part of "Galveston Bay" from the sound-check.

JAN'S COMMENTS: Not a grand finale, but Bruce's performance was pretty solid with only "Nebraska" as a weak point. "Spare Parts" had a different ending the second night in Barcelona but was back to its normal ending in Madrid. The sound was good, the crowd was okay with some shouting going on. The English speeches and funny songs went down better in Madrid than in Barcelona; apparently more people speak English in Madrid.



And then came the encores. I thought there would be a urge of people coming forward when he started "Bobby Jean." To my amazement the security came and stopped everyone. Before "This Hard Land" Bruce looked to the space between the front row and the stage and thought it was rather empty. He grinned and waved the people to come closer. There was a desperate attempt of security to stop it but to no avail.

The pandemonium had started. The stage was rather low so there was no problem climbing onto it. About twenty people climbed on the left side of the stage in front of the speakers but were held back by security preventing them from diving onto Bruce. I think when Bruce still does his speech about "the gift you give me" it sounds rather stupid with around 200 crazies surrounding him. Anyway, it was a security nightmare. Jon Landau was standing



just off-stage and shaking his head in disbelief. In the end even Bruce saw the danger of the situation as he left the stage

without the usual handshakes for the stage-crushers. When the crowd had dispersed you saw that there had been 19 security guards holding the people back. —Jan Rodenrijs

SALVADOR'S COMMENTS: After the show there was a party organized by Sony Music at a restaurant called Samarkanda, with attendance from the label's biggest names from all over the world. Bruce was given a specially designed award for the sales of 1 million copies of *The Ghost of Tom Joad* in Europe. It was a framed map of Europe made with gold and silver, with the cities where he played marked, as

well as indications of how many gold and platinum awards he got in every country.

There were various speeches... finally it was Bruce's time. He spoke about how good his management and Columbia were to him. He said he remembered being 23 years old and being at the Main Point (of course he had to explain to the audience this was a little bar outside Philadelphia where he used to play) where a fan gave him a copy of his first album. He looked at the red label and thought he was in the right place "because that's the label on *Highway 61*." He said he hoped that his music would one day be as inspirational as Dylan's was to him, and that tonight seeing all that young audience in front of the stage made him feel like he had achieved that goal.

After that the party started and everybody danced until the wee wee hours. —Salvador Trepát

Tour coverage will continue this fall in *Backstreets* #54 with Springsteen's upcoming U.S. leg. E-mail your comments on upcoming shows to: joeroberts@aol.com. We also welcome comments, reviews, press, ticket stubs, etc. by mail or by fax (206-728-8827). Many thanks to everyone who's kept us posted on the tour so far—the help we receive from readers is essential.

Special thanks this time to: Bruno Alligordes, Paolo Apostoli, Marc Baca, Massimo Benvegna, Andrea Bernagazzi, Laura and Caroline Brennan, Kim Brockelmann, Marco D'Elia, Rene van Diemen, Ralf Dissman, Manuel Leon Fernandez, Nigel Flynn, Christian Fridell, Keith and Kathy Holden, Peter Inghelbrecht, Jeff Jackel, Stefan Jonsson, Steve and Phil Jump, Raimo Kayhko, Tomas Kempf, Gabi Kugler, John Kwak, Giorgio Malucelli, Neil Manthorpe, Riccardo Marcante, Charlie McGrane, Jörg Mehlw, John Moriarty, Nicole Niebling, Kjell Ove Nordlien, Sally Parker, Massimiliano Petarle, Bob Rizzuti, Jan Rodenrijs, Erik van Roovert, Simone Scardiglia, Frank Schurmann, Clement Schwartz, Philippe Sosnowski, Markus Stager, Mark Stricherz, Mike Sturman, Fabrice Szabo, Urs Tanner, Salvador Trepát, Paul Trimble, Jos Westenberg, and everyone else who provided set lists, sent clippings and photos, faxed reviews or gave us an update. 🐾



RENE VAN DIEMEN PHOTOS

THE GHOST OF TOM JOAD

APRIL

MAY

TOUR
1996

	Rome 10 ITA	Milan 11 ITA	Genoa 13 ITA	London 16 ENG	London 17 ENG	Berlin 19 GER	Antwerp 20 BEL	London 22 ENG	London 24 ENG	London 25 ENG	London 27 ENG	Strasbourg 30 FRA	Brussels 1 BEL	Zurich 2 SWI	Barcelona 6 SPA	Barcelona 7 SPA	Madrid 8 SPA	
PONY BOY											1							PONY BOY
GHOST OF TOM JOAD	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	TOM JOAD
ATLANTIC CITY									2	2	3	2				2		ATLANTIC
ADAM RAISED A CAIN	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2			10		2	2	2		2	ADAM
STRAIGHT TIME	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	STRAIGHT
HIGHWAY 29	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	HWY 29
DARKNESS	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	5	5	5	5	5	5	DARKNESS
MURDER INC.		6		6		6												MURDER
JOHNNY 99	6		6		6		6	6		6	7	6	6	6	6	6	6	JOHNNY
HIGHWAY PATROLMAN										7	8							PATROLMAN
NEBRASKA	7		7	7		7		7				7	7	7	7		7	NEBRASKA
DEAD MAN WALKIN'	8																	DEAD MAN
STATE TROOPER									6									TROOPER
MANSION ON THE HILL		7			7		7		7							7		MANSION
PILGRIM				8			8		8				8	8		8	8	PILGRIM
MY BEST				9														MY BEST
THE WISH	9				8					8	9							THE WISH
IF I SHOULD FALL BEHIND		8								9		9			8			FALL
RED HEADED WOMAN									9				9	9	9	9	9	RH WOMAN
LITTLE THINGS		9	8		9	8	9					8						LITTLE
SELL IT						9		8										SELL IT
THE ANGEL								9										ANGEL
BROTHERS	10	10	9	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	11	10	10	10	10	10	10	BROTHERS
BORN IN THE USA	11	11	10	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	12	11	11	11	11	11	11	BUSA
DRY LIGHTNING	12	12	11	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	13	12	12	12	12	12	12	DRY
SPARE PARTS	13	13	12	13	13	13	13	13		13	14	13	13	13	13	13	13	SPARE
SEEDS									13									SEEDS
YOUNGSTOWN	14	14	13	14	14	14	14	14	14				14	14	14		14	Y'TOWN
POINT BLANK										14	15	14				14		PB
SINALOA COWBOYS	15	15	14	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	16	15	15	15	15	15	15	SINALOA
THE LINE	16	16	15	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	17	16	16	16	16	16	16	THE LINE
BALBOA PARK	17	17	16	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	18	17	17	17	17	17	17	BALBOA
ACROSS THE BORDER	18	18	17	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	19	18	18	18	18	18	18	BORDER
DOES THIS BUS STOP					19					19								BUS STOP
BLINDED BY THE LIGHT								19			20							BLINDED
BOBBY JEAN	19	19	18	19		19	19		19			19	19	19	19	21	19	BJ
THIS HARD LAND	20	20	19	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	21	20	20	20	20	19	20	THL
STREETS OF PHILLY	21	21			21	21	21	21	21		22	21	21	21				STREETS
NO SURRENDER			20	21						21		22			21	20	21	SURRENDER
GALVESTON BAY	22	22	21	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	23	23	22	22	22	22	22	GALVESTON
PROMISED LAND	23	23	22	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	24	24	23	23	23	23	23	PROMISED
BLOWIN' DOWN THE ROAD										24								BLOWIN'

tom joad by the book

the backstreets summer reading list

joad glossary

arroyo —A creek bed or water-carved gully. When dry (*arroyo seco*), a good way to travel in the desert without being seen by the INS.

corazon —"Heart" in Spanish, a key trope in the song and poetry of Mexico; virtually every love song uses the word.

gavacho —Citizen of the U.S.; *gringo*.

huero —Similar to *gavacho*, a generic and somewhat derogatory term for Anglos, referring more to physical characteristics (white skin, blond hair, etc.); "whitey."

hydriodic acid —A restricted substance used primarily as a dairy disinfectant but also used in the production of meth. It can not only "burn right through your skin," but also through concrete. According to Arax and Gorman in the *Los Angeles Times*, "If inhaled, its fumes can cause chemical pneumonia, which can bring a quick, painful death."

ins —The Immigration and Naturalization Service; they police the border in men's room-green Broncos.

jenny, my sweet —A reference to the Jeanette blast furnace at the Brier Hill Works in Youngstown.

k-bar knife —A brand of hunting/fishing/utility knives popular among working-class men. A fisherman's knife would probably have a four inch non-retractable blade, a serrated back edge and tip and a wood handle.

migra —A somewhat derogatory slang term for INS officer (from *Migracion*).

scarfer —One of the toughest jobs in a steel mill according to *Journey to Nowhere*; scarfers torch the steel after it has been rolled in order to remove blemishes.

toncho —A nickname for Octane Booster, a gasoline additive carried in soda cans and sniffed to get high by homeless children around Balboa Park. According to Rotella in the *LA Times*, "The substance bears a resemblance to fumes from a gas tank. The harsh fumes smother cold and hunger, but also corrode the lungs, kidneys, heart and brain."

zona porte —A San Diego neighborhood near the Tijuana River. According to Rotella in the *LA Times*, "A prime gathering spot for migrants and the denizens of the border nether world they attract: smugglers, vendors, robbers, drug users."

[Special thanks to Aaron Fox and Eric Jones]

Let's see: a break at Christmas, finished in May but back to it in September... It's Springsteen's tour schedule, but it sounds suspiciously like school. With summer break here that leaves time to catch up on some Joad-related reading before Bruce's class is back in session.

by christopher phillips

required reading:

It's not every album that comes with a bibliography. If Bruce came off as Professor Springsteen on the Tom Joad Tour (as suggested in *Backstreets* #52), then these are the books on his syllabus.

1. The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck.

As soon as the title of Bruce's new album started circulating last fall, many Springsteen fans hurried to read (or re-read) this novel featuring the album's namesake. If somehow you managed to get through both high school and the new tour without reading *The Grapes of Wrath*, this one's at the top of the list. The structure of Bruce's solo show particularly indicates the importance of the story to Springsteen's message, with Tom Joad usually showing up in both the opener and the introduction to the closer of the main set.

Of course the John Ford movie is what's listed in the album's liner notes, and it's what struck Springsteen first. As he told Bob Costas, "Yeah, that picture I guess I saw in the late '70s and it had a really deep effect on me. I think I'd read some John Steinbeck, probably earlier than that, in high school, and there was something about the film that sort of crystallized the story for me. And it always stayed with me after that, for some reason there was something in that picture that always resonated throughout almost all of my other work."

That's not revisionist history. Back in 1978 Springsteen told *Rolling Stone*: "...I saw *The Grapes of Wrath* on TV, which I used to turn off. That's a terrible thing to say, but I always remember turning it off and turning on some-

thing that was in color. Then I realized it was a stupid thing to do because one night Jon [Landau] and I watched it, and it opened up a whole particular world to me."

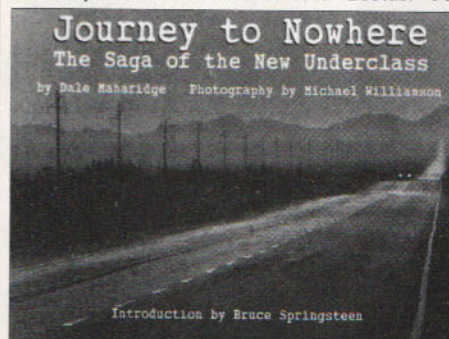
As for Steinbeck's novel, Bruce recently told *NME*: "Then I read the novel, which is incredible. I recently re-read it, and you have that beautiful last scene. The book ends on a singular act of human kindness or compassion—the entire book leads to that point."

One could come up with dozens of compare-and-contrast essay topics—underclass oppression in the U.S.; the search for new work and a new life; farm labor in California; devastating run-ins with the law; the selfless act—but suffice it to say nearly everything in the book informs Bruce's latest work.

2. Journey to Nowhere: The Saga of the New Underclass by Dale Maharidge and Michael Williamson

Originally published in 1985, highly praised and quickly out of print, *Journey to Nowhere* was reprinted this year as a direct result of Springsteen's efforts. The new edition—which looks like the closest thing to a Tom Joad tourbook that we'll get—adds Bruce's song lyrics inspired by the book as well as a short introduction penned by Springsteen. But the main attraction is the original work. Maharidge and Williamson began their three-year trek in 1982, riding the rails and documenting the homeless and out-of-work across the U.S.

Reading this book is also the next best thing to being present at one of Bruce's "Eureka!" experiences. As Bruce told Costas: "I'd





Springsteen with Journey to Nowhere authors Maharidge (left) and Williamson.

written I think all of this record. And I was in my library one night and pulled a book out called *Journey to Nowhere*, which was a book I'd bought years before and I hadn't read. The text is by a fellow named Dale Maharidge and there are some really great photos by a fellow named Michael Williamson, and basically what they did, they went out on the road and they rode the trains from, I think, St. Louis to Oregon. It documented a lot of what had been happening to a group of Americans in the latter half of the '80s—the people that the trickle-down economy never trickled down to. It's a book that makes it very real, puts real faces on what it's like if you slip through those cracks. I was very frightened. I remember I read it all in one night and I closed it—my God, you never know what tomorrow brings.... I had written the whole record and then I read the book, and 'Youngstown' and a song called 'The New Timer' are really drawn from a lot of the information and the stories that were in this particular book."

Here's one inspirational line from the book: "It began in 1803, when James and Daniel Heaton discovered iron ore lining the banks of Yellow Creek just south of Youngstown."

"I'm flattered that it had that impact on him," Maharidge told the *San Jose Mercury News*. "That alone was enough of a thrill to me. If he wanted to take the words from the book verbatim and slap them into his songs, I would have said, 'Fine.'"

3. Two stories from the *Los Angeles Times* provided much of the inspiration for "Balboa Park" and "Sinaloa Cowboys." The articles themselves serve as fascinating further looks into the subject matter of the two songs, but before writing the

lyrics Springsteen got in touch with the reporters for more information. Once the album came out, the *LA Times* did a follow-up story detailing writer Mark Arax's response: "My first reaction was, who in the hell is trying to play a joke on me?... They were good questions... questions a writer would ask.... 'What kind of guns these guys carry? How things were said in Spanish?' He asked about the money. He wanted a sense of place."

3a. "Children of the Border" by Sebastian Rotella in the *LA Times*, April 3, 1993.

This story about transborder children on the streets was what led to "Balboa Park." Rotella writes, "A dozen youths emerged warily from the trees: homeless illegal immigrants who earn a living in a verdant corner of Balboa Park where the cars circle day and night. Where the drivers in business suits and BMWs seek out children who survive by prostituting themselves and selling drugs." Tracking down the original article may prove difficult, but the full text can be found on Kevin Kinder's web page at <<http://www.mcs.net/~kvk/tgotj/bp.txt>>. You can also link to that page through the *Backstreets* site: <<http://members.aol.com/joeroberts/>>.

3b. "California's Illicit Farm Belt Export," by Mark Arax and Tom Gordon in the *LA Times*, March 13, 1995

This article, the seed for "Sinaloa Cowboys," examines the problems that methamphetamine production poses, to everyone from law enforcement to the cooks themselves.

Arax and Gordon write: "Once the domain of outlaw biker gangs, the nation's meth trade has been taken over by Mexican drug families

individualism 101

In *Backstreets* #52 we ran a letter from subscriber Jeff Falk which inspired more responses than anything we've run in a while. His letter criticized Springsteen's—and Steinbeck's— notion of "one big soul" and suggested that Bruce read Ayn Rand instead. Below are just a few of the replies we received.

Dear Editor:

I am writing in response to the letter from Jeff Falk in *Backstreets* #52, regarding Bruce's suggestion that "Maybe we don't have individual souls; maybe there's one big soul we're all part of." Mr. Falk suggests that this "ridiculous" rejection of individualism puts Bruce on a par with both Stalin and Hitler.

I would suggest that it is, in fact, Mr. Falk whose view is "ridiculous," based as it is upon a rather narrow conception of the relationship between the individual and his or her community. A commitment to a community does not entail blind faith in an ideology, be it Stalinism, fascism or even individualism. Rather, there is a rich body of communitarian and feminist literature which suggests that the sort of atrocities carried out in the name of the above ideologies can only occur when we see the victims as "other" and not as a part of "us." Bruce's work has always been about searching for community; indeed, he has claimed on numerous occasions that he first picked up the guitar in order to "talk to people."

Individualism, on the other hand, has not fared well in Bruce's songs. "Nebraska," for example, is a song about what happens when people become isolated from their communities. Even the songs that Mr. Falk cites as being about individualism are all addressed to another person, be it "Wendy," "Mary" or the more generic "Honey." The character in each song is clearly searching for some sort of connection to others, some sense of community.

Mr. Falk's error then appears to be in conflating a rejection of extreme individualism with a commitment to the good of the community over and above the good of its members. This is an absurd claim, and one which ignores the strong tradition of collectivity inherent in societies other than his native USA. It is, in fact, this sort of ethnocentrism and lack of imagination which, I believe, is more likely to lead to the horrors that Mr. Falk identifies, than Bruce's rather more intelligent suggestion that we should care for others as if they were part of ourselves.

Finally, with regard to Mr. Falk's suggestion that Bruce should read Ayn Rand and not John Steinbeck, I would suggest that it is Mr. Falk who should read more widely, for his letter appears to be evidence in favor of the commonly held maxim that a little knowledge is a very dangerous thing.

Simon Stow
Montreal, Canada

Dear Editor:

When John Steinbeck and Springsteen suggest that people have one big soul, they are not denying individual autonomy. Instead, they are declaring that no one person is more or less deserving of rights and dignity.

One could take Falk's comment about Stalin and Hitler and argue the opposite: These infa-

mous men did not see that all people have one interconnected soul, and therefore they thought nothing of murdering individuals.

In order for people to treat each other with the respect demanded by individuals and sought after in Steinbeck and Springsteen's work, we first need to acknowledge commonalities, not differences. What better way to express this idea than to suggest that we all have one big soul because we spring from the same source?

Sarah Weisman
Baltimore, MD

Dear Editor:

One has to see that this novel was written in 1939 and describes America's economical development of the decade: poor farmers losing their land, going west and becoming poorer and poorer along the way. With the example of the Joad family, Steinbeck describes how poverty is the fertile soil for ideas of one big community. Falk uses the examples of Hitler and Stalin to say that the thought of one big soul is the most dangerous one in history. These examples seem a bit strong to me, because in the 1930s people didn't know communism would fail as a system, they didn't know that their faith in a different system would be exploited. Only decades later would history prove that the idea of communism was a utopian one. Yet, utopias are historically developed ideas of alternatives to the existing society. And this is what Tom Joad's/Steinbeck's statement has to be seen as. He is dreaming of an order that doesn't allow the upright people to fail. Don't get me wrong, I am as much as you convinced of the dangerous effects of dictatorships like National Socialism or communism, but this is because I live in the '90s and I can judge political ideas with my knowledge of history. Having grown up in a system that was aiming at communism (East Germany, that was), I am well aware of the negative side of it all. I know that the idea failed in practice (and I am glad it did) but I do understand that people in the 1930s believed in the idea of it.

Even though I can see the need for people to be individuals, I still believe that people are also a part of society. If everybody just followed his individual ideas and aims, society would not work, because values and norms would not exist. As with all things in life, there has to be certain balance. People cannot exist solely as individuals, and they cannot exist when giving up all their individual needs and wants to society. The solution lies in the balance between. People—with all their individual traits and characters—always belong to a certain group; that may be a religious, political or even a family-type of group. And beyond all that, they are part of mankind—and with it comes an obligation to live within the norms and codes the group/community has set up.

Bruce got his inspiration to make an album from a movie/novel and he should be allowed to give a little insight as to what element gave the inspiration. Whether this element is from today's standpoint questionable (because it has been proven wrong by history) doesn't matter here—at least that's the way I see it.

Kristina Pfutzner
Helbra, Germany

in the rural belt from San Diego County to Redding. Operating from Sinaloa and other states deep inside Mexico, these families oversee teams of cookers dispatched to orchards, cotton fields, chicken ranches and abandoned dairies north of the border....

"Unwilling to let outsiders horn in, these 'Sinaloa Cowboys' with their beaver hats, boots and ostrich-skin belts are armed and dangerous. 'Stay out if you value your ass!' read the spray-painted message in Spanish and English on the side of a large shed in rural Firebaugh, west of Fresno."

Again, with web access, you can check out the full text at <<http://www.mcs.net/~kvk/tgotj/sc.txt>> or by linking from <<http://members.aol.com/joeroberts/>>.

4. *A Season for Justice* by Morris Dees

Dees is a lawyer and the director of Southern Poverty Law Center/Klanwatch. This autobiography chronicles his civil rights cases, one of which became the basis of "Galveston Bay."

The 1985 movie *Alamo Bay*, directed by Louis Malle (also the director of 1981's *Atlantic City*), is based on the same incident. A short description from *VideoHound's Golden Movie Retriever* will sound familiar: "A slow-moving but sincere tale of contemporary racism. An angry Vietnam veteran and his redneck buddies feel threatened by Vietnamese refugees who want to go into the fishing business."

It's hard to believe that the film didn't play a part in inspiring Bruce, but his listing of *A Season for Justice* in the liner notes suggests he found the book even more provocative. Dees has written other books, one focusing on neo-Nazis and his most recent, *Gathering Storm*, about the militia movement.

extra credit:

• *The Killer Inside Me* by Jim Thompson

"People are people... You don't hurt them, they won't hurt you... a man doesn't get any more out of life than he puts into it... the boy is fatter to the man... It's not the heat, but the humidity... Another thing about the weather. Everybody talks about it, but no one does anything about it... Every cloud has its silver lining... if we didn't have rain we wouldn't have rainbows, now would we?... Haste makes waste... I like to look before I leap."

It sounds like an early draft of "My Best Was Never Good Enough," but those are

actually aphorisms spouted by the narrator in only the first three pages of this 1952 novel.

Springsteen cleared up a bit of the mystery surrounding "My Best" when he introduced the song on tour, giving fans a point of reference for the song besides *Forrest Gump*. Here's what he said in Berkeley on 11/29/95:

"This next song came from when I was reading this Jim Thompson novel called *The Killer Inside Me*. A very entertaining book. In it there's a sheriff who's always speaking in clichés and drives everybody crazy. He 'plays' this hick in this little small town and he's always, 'Have a nice day,' y'know, 'It's rainin' as hard as a cow pissin' on a flat rock'... so this goes on throughout the book. Meanwhile he's got this real sort of sinister—very smart, sinister mind and he goes about slowly killing off every one of his enemies. I said, well that sounds like a good idea. The singing in clichés part [that is]..."

Thompson, born in Oklahoma shortly after the turn of the century, cranked out loads of fantastic pulp crime novels, and his work has recently been a particularly hot commodity in Hollywood. This story of sheriff Lou Ford—not a bad name for a Springsteen character, either—is regarded as one of his best.

• *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* by James Agee and Walker Evans

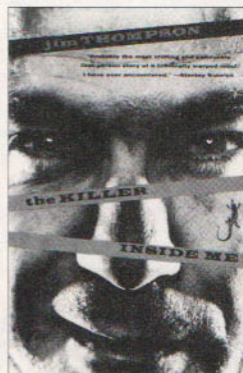
First published in 1941 by writer Agee and photographer Evans, who went on assignment for *Fortune* magazine to document sharecroppers in the Deep South in 1936. The landmark book combines journalism, ethnography, and photography in its portrayal of the lives of three tenant farmer families in Alabama.

Rather than living out the American Dream, where things continue to get better and better, the subjects of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* became marginalized. The book easily goes hand in hand with *The Grapes of Wrath* in its subject matter, and with Steinbeck's novel published in 1939, the respective authors were working on them at precisely the same time. If it weren't for the very real accompanying portrait of Agee's text, the people in Evans's photographs could easily be Ma, Pa, Tom and the rest of the Joad family.

• *And Their Children After Them* by Dale Maharidge and Michael Williamson

If *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* was the spiritual forefather to *Journey to Nowhere*, it was the actual forefather to Maharidge and Williamson's next book. While Springsteen went searching for Tom Joad's spirit, the authors of *Journey to Nowhere* went looking for flesh and blood from Agee and Evans's work 50 years earlier.

Maharidge and Williamson, spent three years, from 1985 to 1988, in Alabama, meeting all 12 survivors of the original family members and over a hundred of their descen-



dants. And *Their Children After Them*, its title taken from the same bible verse as Agee and Evans' title, was published in 1989.

The book is not a pure sequel—Maharidge seems somewhat at odds with Agee, and there are striking dissimilarities in their approach. It's difficult to say which is more effective, but for one comparison with a clear preference check out Greil Marcus's essay on the two books, "The Expanding Vacant Spot" from his new collection titled *The Dustbin of History*. *And Their Children After Them* won the 1990 Pulitzer Prize in non-fiction.

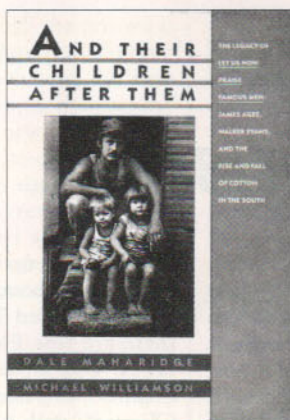
Interestingly, the reprinting of *Journey to Nowhere* allowed Maharidge and Williamson a chance to go back and do the same kind of follow-up with their own book, revisiting Youngstown and other towns for an epilogue in the new edition of *Journey*.

Maharidge and Williamson also collaborated on *The Last Great American Hobo*, and Maharidge is currently finishing a book on race relations in California.

•**More Steinbeck** can't hurt: *East of Eden* in particular, considering the prominence of "Adam Raised a Cain" on this tour. Bruce also performed "Adam" at last fall's Bridge Benefit, along with future tour standards "Tom Joad," "Sinaloa Cowboys," and "This Hard Land." But by opening with the rare "Seeds," it became more than a distillation of the typical Joad show—the performance can easily be seen as the ultimate "Steinbeck set."

East of Eden also informs songs like "Spare Parts" and "Galveston Bay," sharing with them the overriding concept of the choice: "Why, that makes a man great, that gives him stature with the gods, for in his weakness and his filth and his murder of his brother he has still the great choice. He can choose his course and fight it through and win.... It is easy out of laziness, out of weakness, to throw oneself into the lap of deity, saying, 'I couldn't help it; the way was set.' But think of the glory of the choice! That makes a man a man. A cat has no choice, a bee must make honey." Reading Steinbeck's words after what Bruce has been saying, it's hard not to be reminded of Janey carrying her son home or Billy pocketing his knife.

"Bruce is a musical Steinbeck," Maharidge told the *Washington Post*. "The people he's writing about don't have a voice, so the songs are important, they talk about what's going on in our society today."



in the periodicals section

Bruce Springsteen may get inspired by a good read, but he usually seems less excited about his own name in print. Few performers have been more reluctant than Springsteen to allow printed words to get in the way of lyrics and music. Pre-*Tom Joad* interviews appeared at a rate of less than one per year, and only two major interviews had reached print since 1987. In all, since 1973, 13 years ticked off Springsteen's career with no interviews whatsoever.

Reluctant to talk and years down the road from his last hit album, Springsteen appeared on few magazine covers anywhere during the first half of the '90s. The man who ruled the print world during *Born in the USA*, whose photo made over 230 magazine covers during the first 19 years of his career, had but a dozen covers in the last five years. With the *Tom Joad* tour, however, came the most extensive and revealing series of interviews Bruce has granted in years.

The first hint of the change to come was a stunning performance cover shot by Neils Van Iperen and a lengthy interview conducted by Neil Strauss in the October 1995 *Guitar World*. With additional photos by Neal Preston and Catherine Bauknight, and separate articles on Nils Lofgren and Steve Van Zandt, the coverage revealed an expansive Springsteen discussing Nirvana, the *Blood Brothers* documentary, his kids, and the advice he imagines a young Bruce Springsteen would give to him today ("louder guitars").

The *Guitar World* interview seemed for a time to be nothing more than a welcome solo shot. But in February, Bruce launched the media equivalent of a Jersey club tour, sitting for six major interviews in three months, with revelations extending beyond *Tom Joad* and the current tour.

In the March 9 *New Musical Express*, Bruce told interviewer Martin Gavin that the E Street Band was his living substitution for a community to which he, as a musician, could not otherwise connect. The band was a lost boys club, Bruce said, a comforting place in which to hide from a hostile world. Getting older, however, brought a realization that hiding leads to a limited life, and besides, the rediscovery of his folk "voice" kindled a desire to break the barriers on his ability to express new musical ideas.

Springsteen's introspective nature took a startling turn in the April issue of *MOJO* as Bruce explained his interest in the moment where the will to live and the will toward death and destruction collide. Similar thoughts were placed in a more political context by interviewer David Corn, Washington editor of *The Nation*, whose piece entitled "Bruce Springsteen Gets His Revenge" ran in the April *Mother Jones*.

Bruce's first sit-down with the gay press resulted in a cover photo and article in the April 2 *Advocate* that solidified the link between Bruce's

support for mainstream causes (Amnesty International, USA for Africa, Vietnam Veterans of America, and various foodbanks) and the gay community. Neal Preston's full-page color photo inside, shot against a masonry wall as Bruce casts a long shadow, ranks as one of the finest Springsteen photos of all time.

Ticketmaster's venture into magazine journalism, the glossy *Live*, premiered in February with "Bare Bruce," an interview-based spread again beautifully photographed by Preston. Longtime

Springsteen author Steve Pond sent fans to their tapes by pointing out lyrical connections between "Seaside Bar Song" and "The Ghost of Tom Joad," and proceeded to ask, and answer, whether Bruce's music is relevant to a changing world.

Rounding out the interviews was *Guitar World Acoustic* (#17), but the coverage didn't stop there. *Backstreets'* Charles R. Cross filed a cover story in the April *CD Review* on the future of the E Street Band. *Newsweek* picked up the relevancy theme in an April 1 issue on the *Tom Joad* tour. Promoting its airing of the *Blood Brothers* video and Sony Studio show, the Disney Channel ran a cover story and article on Bruce in its February-March magazine.

Springsteen-related causes resulted in a March cover story in *Teamster* magazine. Under a headline reading "The Boss Stands Up For Working Families: Bruce Springsteen Raises Money for Teamsters Fighting For Their Jobs," members of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters got a glowing account of Bruce's contributions to striking newspaper workers during the Detroit shows in early January.

Contrary to the relaxed and expansive Bruce revealed by the interviews, *Autograph Collector* depicted Bruce in its April issue as a "reluctant signer." But Springsteen is more importantly an avid recorder, and a welcome glimpse into his recording process came in the June issue of *Mix*. Despite the technical info that may be lost on a non-professional, "A Visit to Thrill Hill: Bruce Springsteen's 15 Years of Recording at Home" provides the most in-depth look to date at Springsteen's home recording studio, including an interview with engineer Toby Scott. Most revealing of all is the photograph of the studio that shows—on the wall in the background, straight out of "Local Hero"—a black velvet painting of the Boss himself.

Although highly retrospective, Bruce used the interviews to slip in glimpses of the future. In the October *Guitar World* Springsteen said it might be fun to issue "some sort of collection of stuff" drawing on outtakes in response to all the requests from fans. The possibility of a band tour following *Tom Joad* got a verbal thumbs up in the *New Musical Express*.

—Robert Crane



The first wave

Invasion of *The Lost Masters*

By Charles R. Cross

They've arrived. Not the aliens from "Independence Day" but the first batch of the much talked about 19-CD set of 1979-1984 outtakes titled *The Lost Masters*. Not only does this set represent the most ambitious undertaking yet in the world of Bruce Springsteen bootlegs, but it also marks one of the most historically significant looks into the inner workings of Springsteen's recording process. When word of the impending release hit the collecting community in early June, there was talk of almost nothing else.

As a history lesson, this is fascinating stuff. Never before have collectors been invited into the rehearsal room. There are several groups of multiple takes here, including one extraordinarily long run of "Held Up Without a Gun." It follows the song as Springsteen and the band play it again and again, working out the melody and the lyric as he refines it upon each rendering, each band member experimenting with different subtle nuances. What's perhaps most surprising about this song—and many of the tunes on these CDs—are how close the original first-take version ended up being to the final released track, no matter how much time and effort the band spent on recording each song.

Though only the first five CDs of the set were out by July, indications are that the bulk of the set will offer similar material, mixing rehearsals with songwriting demos and studio outtakes. In general the sound quality is excellent. What's clear throughout this set is that whoever leaked these tapes had access to the originals—the source must have been one or two people involved with the recording process.

Beginning with the lowest-numbered CD so far, Vol. 4 (the order these CDs have been released in—4, 6, 10, 11, and 17

in the initial run—is perhaps the most bizarre element) is titled *Big Expendables (Songs That Got Away)*. It begins with the acoustic rehearsal of "Roulette" and is followed by a band studio version. Contrasting these two takes shows us the difference between Bruce as a solo act and as the leader of the E Street Band. Max Weinberg makes this song on the

band version, driving it with some of his best drumming ever. And Springsteen's performance, on vocals and guitar, is simply otherworldly. The studio take has a different vocal, a different mix, and slight changes in lyrics, but overall it's not that distinct (nor necessarily better) from the released track. "Protection" is up next, and this is one of the real gems of the set. Heavily driven by a keyboard riff (reminiscent of other *Born in the USA* outtakes), it shares the same frantic pace as "Roulette." The Donna Summer version was officially released, but what still remains unreleased (at least at this point) is the duet between Bruce and Donna which is better than their individual efforts. If Springsteen had released this dance-type track, maybe he would have avoided the miscues of the three *BUSA* remixes, as "Protection" would have been right at home in Studio 54.

The rest of Vol. 4 is mostly rehearsals. There are five tracks of "Under the Gun" and one of "Chain Lightning," and both deserved the cutting room floor that Bruce left them on. "The Man Who Got Away" is one of the most interesting titles in Bruce's catalog, yet the song itself (which was originally listed on an early run sheet as being on Bruce's selection for the single album *River*), is somewhat of a disappointment. The lyrics tell the story of a man who left his family and his kids, though even

in the band rehearsal Bruce doesn't seem set on the lyrics.

Many of the tracks on Vol. 4, though they are in excellent sound quality, sound distant. Essentially these are band proofs, recorded by a microphone sitting in the background several feet away from the band. Bruce recorded these rehearsals so that he could capture any ideas that

the group might have—they were never intended to be listened to by any audience. The fact that we get a peek into those sessions can be fascinating, but most of the time it's simply frustrating since you hear that

there's a great song or performance going on, but the microphone is ten feet away. The mic seems to be set up very close to Max Weinberg and when he speaks or plays it's louder than the other sounds.

The difference between a rehearsal tape, which most likely was made with one microphone sitting in a corner, and an actual studio outtake, where each instrument is mic-ed individually and the numerous tracks are mixed together, can be dramatic. Though the rehearsal tapes can be warm, ambient recordings, on songs like "I Don't Want to Be" they don't have the full dynamics of a studio recording. "I

Don't Want to Be" sounds like a fun enough romp but the lyrics can't be heard well and since Clarence Clemons is closer to the mic than anyone else, his background vocals are the dominant sound.

Vol. 6 is the shortest of the first five at only 43:45, and it is one of the best of this bunch (the longest two CDs, Vol. 10 and 11, are the least interesting, proving

that it's not length but selection that makes a bootleg CD worthwhile). Subtitled "Travel in Fear," these are true *River* studio outtakes, and most of them are exceptional performances. The CD starts with two versions of "Hungry Heart," both billed as alternate mixes. The main difference between these tracks and the version we heard as a single is these are before the whole song was sped up a notch. Artistically, this difference doesn't make the song any more interesting—but it does seem like it might have fit *The River* better than the overly commercial version that was released.

One of the gems of Vol. 6 is "The Price You Pay," which features both a different beginning and a different ending. More acoustic guitar is evident on this take and it features alternate lyrics, the ones that Bruce sang live in 1981. There's a great "Stolen Car" and a different "The Ties That Bind," but both are similar to what's heard on the *The Ties That Bind* boot. "Angelyne" also previously showed up on *The Definitive River Outtakes*. The CD ends with a few fragments of "Angelyne" done acoustically, an early version of "The River." And

if you forgot what "Hungry Heart" sounded like on *The River*, here's yet another take that's virtually indistinguishable from the released version (shades of *Prodigal Son*).

Vol. 10 is subtitled "Jesse James and the Wages of Sin, Solo Masters" and the "masters" moniker makes it sound like something definitive. A better title might be "Sloppy solo songwriting rehearsals." This CD contains 26 tracks, 14 previously unreleased songs (actually snippets of songs), plus two alternative versions of released tunes ("Glory Days" and "Downbound Train"). Almost all the songs are frag-



Vol. VI: ★★★



Vol. IV: ★★★

ments, and though the process is fascinating to listen to—Springsteen builds each song by playing it with one new element each time—it's also hard to listen to: Bruce isn't even singing some of the lyrics (instead, they are mumbled). This was stuff that Bruce never even intended the band to hear. And while the titles of the songs are incredibly vivid, the songs themselves, at this stage, are not.

The most interesting song is "Baby I'm So Cold (Turn the Lights Down Low)" which has roughly the same melody as "Follow That Dream" but with lyrics from "Loose Ends" (at least a few snippets). "Your Love (Is All Around Me Now)" (not the theme to "The Mary Tyler Moore Show") has an interesting melody, but Springsteen's breaking voice makes it hard to listen to. There are four takes of "Wages of Sin," a title that sounds like it could be a classic Springsteen song but isn't. The rest of the tracks are not ones that you can expect to reappear in concert anytime soon.

A partial take of "Glory Days" is notable because Bruce starts singing about "Stockton," a town that showed up again on *The Ghost of Tom Joad* album. The song listed here as "Jesse James" is probably the song previously discussed by Springsteen as "Robert Ford," a BUSA outtake. Though it thematically harkens back to the Wild West songs Bruce wrote in 1973, it hadn't jelled by the time of these sessions.

Vol. 11 is one hour of the E Street Band rehearsing. As previously discussed, these rehearsal tapes are distant and though this one is a little better than the others, the vocals are hard to make out. What's most incisive about this CD is how good the E Street Band is from the first take. Still, few will have the patience to listen to six takes that essentially the song. There's even more overkill on "Held Up Without a Gun," of which there are eight takes. This song was a throwaway as an officially released B-side and it's a throwaway here.

The eight versions of "Two Hearts" are equally a waste of CD space.

The only two tracks on Vol. 11 noting are two that we've never heard before (at least from the E Street Band). "Bring on the Night" is just a jam, probably to get the band warmed up. So is the instrumental "Pipeline," which is misidentified on the set as "Walk, Don't Run." Surf music is not a genre associated with the E Street Band, but they rip this track up. The song stops and starts, but they rock.

The final CD of the series so far, Vol. 17, is by far the most interesting. It's subtitled "Hollywood Hills Garage Tape," and most of it is solo songwriting demos done by Bruce with a drum machine and keyboards. Though the drum programming is crude (and at times annoying), it's still amazing that Bruce managed to do all of this by himself. Springsteen may have had help with the drums and the keyboards, but the overall musicianship is amazing. This is a world away from *The Ghost of Tom Joad* solo material, with melodies and riffs to spare.

The CD starts with a beautiful take of "Follow That Dream." Even as a demo Springsteen has this song nailed and his singing is beautiful here. He follows that with the biggest dud of this CD, four takes of an early version of "My Hometown" called "Your Hometown." Bruce has the lyrics pretty much complete but the melody is awful and the drums make the song seem like a carnival. There's more of a country feel to this take, particularly with Bruce's guitar solos.

The rockabilly version of "Sugarland" that follows has the same beat as "Your Hometown," but this time around it's slightly more palatable. There's also a song titled "Delivery Man" that again has an upbeat rockabilly feel to it and shares some structure with "Working on the High-

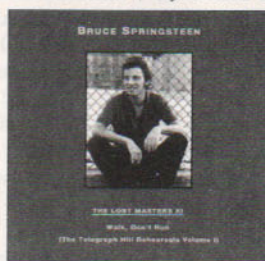
way." "Little Girl" (correct title, "Little Girl Like You") is yet another country-inspired upbeat tune with some nice guitar work by Bruce doing his best James Burton.

Most fans will be familiar with "Bye Bye Johnny," which was an officially released B-side, and there are two gorgeous takes here. Bruce succeeds because he strips away the excess found on some of

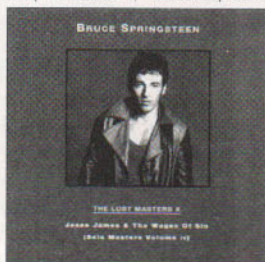
these other demos. The song is simply his voice, a little keyboard, a little guitar. In this spare, raw form the song sounds like it would have fit perfectly on *Nebraska*. The second take of this includes an extra verse.

The final two noteworthy songs are unreleased tunes that have only been rumored as titles before. "Unsatisfied Heart" ends the CD, and at almost six minutes, it is one of the longest songs in this entire series and perhaps one of the most significant. It has every lyric element that a great Springsteen song needs: a man, a family, a secret, a darkness. Like the best of Bruce's work, the man is forced to confront his darkness through a series of dreams. The protagonist is a man named George who lives in the little town, has "two beautiful children, and a kind and loving wife." Then one day a man comes to town and "mentions something that I'd done a long time ago." The secret forces George to make the ultimate ethical decision of Bruce Springsteen's work—whether to flee or stay with his family and see them destroyed by his past. He flees but even distance can never let him escape his dreams of his family, his house, his wife, his "unsatisfied heart."

"Unsatisfied Heart" is one of the best songs Bruce Springsteen ever wrote. He may have left it off the official albums because it was similar in theme to several other tunes he did release (most notably "Stolen Car"). It's also noteworthy because it addresses the themes of betrayal and a hidden self that would come up several years later in the *Tunnel of Love* album, particularly on songs like "Cautious Man" and "Brilliant Disguise." George has his bril-



Vol. 11: ★★



Vol. 10: ★★

The Lost Masters: The Backstreets Edit

The best tracks from The Lost Masters as they should have been bootied. This is our selected edit for your CD-R or tape player.

Travel in Fear (Selected River Sessions)

Roulette

Acoustic demo
(from Vol. 4) 1:31

Roulette

Original version
(from Vol. 4) 3:44

Protection

(from Vol. 4) 3:36

Angelyne #1

Acoustic demo
(from Vol. 6) 1:37

The Ties That Bind

(from Vol. 6) 3:36

Hungry Heart #1

(from Vol. 6) 3:34

I Wanna Be With You

(from Vol. 6) 3:20

The Price You Pay

Alternate take
(from Vol. 6) 5:38

Stolen Car #2

Alternate lyrics
(from Vol. 6) 4:14

Promises We Couldn't Keep (Selected BUSA Sessions)

Jesse James #2

(from Vol. 10) 1:39

Baby I'm So Cold

(from Vol. 10) 3:46

Follow That Dream #2

(from Vol. 17) 4:02

Glory Days

Original demo
(from Vol. 10) 2:03

Your Love (Is All Around

Me Now) #1

(from Vol. 10) 5:58

Your Hometown #3

(from Vol. 17) 3:41

Sugarland #1

Rockabilly version
(from Vol. 17) 2:50

Delivery Man

(from Vol. 17) 2:21

Bye Bye Johnny #4

(from Vol. 17) 3:03

County Fair #14

(from Vol. 17) 5:17

Unsatisfied Heart

(from Vol. 17) 5:43

liant disguise broken when the stranger comes to town, and he lives with an unsatisfied heart, wondering if he can stand the pain of the love he lost. Like the best of Bruce's work, "Unsatisfied Heart" works because it only deals in universal themes, in heartache and loss.

As a piece of music, this demo is still a skeleton of song, barely crafted around one riff. But that riff is so warm and tender that it's enough to make this an enchanting piece of music, even if there isn't much there. Springsteen's singing is as uplifting and melodic as he ever gets. Even though this song is but an outline of the song that he intends it to be, it's magnificent.

The other gem is "County Fair," incorrectly listed here as take #1 (the bootleggers here

have come up with their own numbering system for these demos and have chucked the one that Bruce originally used, rewriting history!). This song shares a low-key, quiet melody with "Unsatisfied Heart," and like that song it stretches on for some time, slowly fading out. These are two of most beautiful endings in Bruce's canon.

"County Fair" most likely is a recording featuring at least Roy Bittan if not the entire E Street Band, contrary to what the

liner notes here tell you. In general you can disregard anything that "Yazoo Street" says on the notes to this series—the bootleggers were working off of tapes that gave no real information about recording locations, so most of the venues here are at best a good guess.



Vol. 17: ★★★★★

By Richard Breton and Lynn Elder

For the benefit of our readers, *Backstreets* magazine provides ratings of unauthorized releases currently in circulation. Don't write us asking where these can be obtained. *Backstreets* in no manner, shape, or form endorses these recordings. These reviews are provided by our columnists solely for informational purposes. Despite these words of warning, some collectors will still seek this material out, and for those collectors, our reviews should help you steer clear of the real losers.

Our advice is let the buyer beware, and demand to listen to material before you buy it. Each title here has been rated for packaging, performance, and sound quality on a scale from one to ten, one being awful, and ten being quality generally found on legitimate releases.

•**Jacksonville (& My Father's Place)**
(Midnight Beat, 2CD)
Packaging: 8
Sound Quality: 9
Performance: 9

There's been speculation for years on why soundboard recordings have never surfaced

from the 1977 tour. The common notion is that direct soundboard tapes were not made as such, but instead microphones were placed on stage or at the board and the shows recorded this way. While it may never be fully known, what is known is that this is not a soundboard tape as it has sometimes been claimed. What we do have here is a great audience recording of a fine show recorded at the Jacksonville Auditorium in Jacksonville, Florida, on March 4, 1977. It's not the complete show, but all circulating tapes of this show have been incomplete.


Highlights include "Night," "Rendezvous," "Mona/She's the One" and "Backstreets." The Miami Horns are in attendance, and they play along beautifully. The trumpet blast during the beginning portion of "It's My Life" is awe-inspiring, and they lend much to the great versions of "Tenth Avenue Freeze-Out" and "Action in the Streets" found here. "Rosalita" cuts out about two-thirds of the way through the song, but every tape I've heard ran out at the same spot. Too bad the rest of the show has never surfaced.

The bonus tracks are an incomplete portion of Bruce's radio broadcast show at My

The packaging on this set in general is inferior—all of the pictures are ripped off from other sources (mostly from the pages of *Backstreets*). The one concession to packaging is the spines of the CDs, which produce the picture of Bruce from the "My Hometown" sleeve once you put all 19 together. Still, considering the hoopla over this release and the exclusivity of these tapes, it seems like the manufacturers could have made a better effort in the design of these much-touted CDs.

Which brings us to a larger point: Though there are some individual highlights on these CDs (particularly on Vol. 17) and some songs are fascinating for their historical insights, considered as albums—things you might want to put on your CD player and sit down and listen to for an hour—they are failures. The bootleggers made this a 19-CD set because they'd make more money selling 19 CDs than

five edited CDs. If one were to take the material on this first batch of five and re-edit them to leave off the real crap, there are a couple of five star CDs here (see sidebar on page 27).

But though there are some great songs within this whole mess, these CDs are not great albums in that they don't separate the good from the bad, they don't put the songs in any logical order, and they include many tracks that even the most rabid fans will not want to listen to more than a couple of times. With the exceptions noted, these are not the most playable CDs, so make sure and have your skip button read on the remote control. With 14 more CDs to go in the *Lost Masters* series, we can expect many more unreleased classics; but if these first five CDs are any indication, those gems will be hidden among spotty rehearsals and demos that probably shouldn't have seen the light of day. 

Father's Place in Roslyn, NY, on July 31, 1973. The show starts at the third song, so the first two songs ("4th of July, Asbury Park (Sandy)" and a full band "New York City Serenade") are missing. There appears to be plenty of time left on the CD, so I don't know why these songs are missing. It's unfortunate too, since the songs that do appear have never appeared on CD in better quality.

Sound is about as good as it gets given the age of the shows. I still don't know why the 1973 tracks show up here since there are plenty of great 1977 show recordings never released on CD to grab bonus tracks from. So what you end up with is two incomplete shows with great sound. Still I recommend this set mainly because there are so few good '77 shows that have been released—and this is a good one.

•**Orpheum**
(Moonraker, 2CD)
Packaging: 5
Sound Quality: 8
Performance: 10

This is the best set to surface so far of the first leg of the US tour, but then again I was there so this review may be a little biased. Read on and you can decide for yourself.

Originally scheduled as the last stop of the first leg of the current tour before Christmas (before another New York date was added for the following night), this is from the second night at the Orpheum Theater in Boston on December 16, 1995. This show, which turned out to be the longest of the tour up to this point, included the debut of "Brothers Under the Bridges" and the first live performance of "The Promised Land" on this tour. Springsteen himself remarked after the show that this was the best audience and show of the tour so far.

Highlights include searing versions of "Adam Raised a Cain," "Darkness on the Edge of Town," "Born in the USA," and "Spare Parts." All the songs from the *Tom Joad* album, with the exception of "The New Timer" played the previous night (for what seems to be the last time), are performed beautifully. "Brothers Under the Bridges" is quite possibly the only new song debuted on this tour that ranks with Bruce's best from the last album. The audience response after a fine "Streets of Philadelphia" was great. "Does This Bus Stop at 82nd Street?" has the Dylan impersonation on the "interstellar mongrel nymphs"

line. The real surprise was the inclusion of a great acoustic version of "The Promised Land" after "Galveston Bay," and if you listen you can hear the audience sing along. Even "My Best Was Never Good Enough" was special, with a well placed comedic pause within the song.

I downgraded the sound quality based on the amount of audience coughing going on during the show. You must remember, this was December in Massachusetts and it was cold and snowy for both nights. I stood in line outside all day the previous day waiting for the ticket drop, so I can sympathize with those in attendance who felt the need to cough.

Unfortunately, packaging that includes pictures from the Sony Studios '95 concert recently shown on the Disney Channel does nothing to enhance this set. I would have also liked to have had bonus tracks of songs only played the previous night added at the end. Regardless, this one's a keeper.



•**The Arms of God**
(E. St. Records, 2CD)
Packaging: 5
Sound Quality: 9
Performance: 9

This was the first boot out of the Philadelphia radio broadcast, and it's a good start. A few other random songs are added to the set, including "Youngstown" from Letterman, "Angel Eyes" from the Sinatra benefit, and the first part of the Bob Costas interview from the Count Basie Theater. The quality is excellent throughout, since the sources are radio or video broadcasts. The Philadelphia broadcast is so clear it is most likely from a feed direct off the satellite. Particularly nice is the Sinatra track, which Bruce really sings with heart. The package is well-designed, and since it uses the "cog" illustration from

the tour shirts, an image designed by Bruce himself, you can thank him for the graphics.

Though the Costas interview is insightful, one does question putting it on such a CD—how many times would anyone want to go back and listen to this? Overall though this is a solid boot with a great title (a line from "Youngstown"). This boot is subtitled "Solo Acoustic Tour, Volume 2."



•**Newcastle Night**
(Crystal Cat, 2CD)
Packaging: 9
Sound Quality: 8
Performance: 10

There's a bunch of titles from the European leg of the tour being released, several of which are from Crystal Cat. This is from fairly early in this leg, from the England City Hall in Newcastle, England, on March 2, 1996.

Although not that different in style or set list from the second US leg of the tour, there are some differences worth noting. At several of the European shows, including this one, Bruce would include both "It's the Little Things That Count" and "Sell It and They Will Come" together in the set list. Also, "Does This Bus Stop at 82nd Street?" was dropped for the most part in favor of "Bobby Jean." But the most notable difference is the eventual dropping of "My Best Was Never Good Enough" as the show closer for a totally reworked version of "The Promised Land," written as "New Promised Land" on some early set lists where it was performed.

Bruce has plenty of interaction with the audience on this night, and was in a great mood throughout the show. There's some different guitar work within "Straight Time," and "Dry Lightning" has a slightly different beginning. The very end of

"Sinaloa Cowboys" appears to be missing since the audience applause appears too quickly. "Bobby Jean" works very nicely acoustically.

"New Promised Land" is so radically different than the acoustic treatments of "The Promised Land" heard during the first or second US legs of the tour that it's virtually unrecognizable as the same song save for the lyrics. The guitar is not strummed, it's slapped or pounded upon while fingering the chords. And the vocal line melody everyone is familiar with is replaced by an almost spoken word delivery. Some folks that have heard it have liked it and others have not, so you'll have to hear it and decide for yourself.

This title is up to Crystal Cat's usual high standards for sound and packaging, although Bruce sounds more distant on this title compared to other titles. Also included as a bonus track is an interview Bruce did after the show. There are so many great but similar European tour show titles coming out, it's hard to separate a must-have from one that's just nice to have. I'll just say that while you might not get this one first, you shouldn't pass it up either.



•**Berkeley Night**
(Crystal Cat, 2CD)
Packaging: 9
Sound Quality: 9
Performance: 8

Crystal Cat has consistently put out high quality titles in the past, and this is no exception. This is from the first of two nights at the Berkeley Community Theater in San Francisco, California, on November 29, 1995.

Highlights include "The Ghost of Tom Joad," "Highway 29," "Murder Incorporated," "Nebraska," "Dry Lightning" and "Sinaloa Cowboys." It sounds like there's one badly tuned string on

"Darkness on the Edge of Town" which mars a particularly nice performance of the song. "It's the Little Things That Count," a somewhat amusing new song (with an even more amusing intro) that was debuted a couple nights earlier in LA is performed here for just the second time. The seven bonus tracks include a great version of "The New Timer" from Chicago and also includes Bruce's speech and performance of "Angel Eyes" from the televised Frank Sinatra tribute.

Crystal Cat's 2CD packaging is designed for the "clamshell" CD jewel boxes rather than the 2CD "slimline" jewel boxes that everyone else is using, but otherwise they still set the standard for packaging, with various pictures of Bruce from the tour, ticket stubs, the outside of the venue, etc.

Although it's the sixth show of the tour, the performance (or maybe it's the audience) still sounds a bit tentative in places. It's still a fine show from early in the first leg, and it sounds great.



•**Sell It and They Will Come**
(E. St. Records, 2CD)
Packaging: 9
Sound Quality: 9
Performance: 9

This is the first complete show to surface from the second leg of the US tour, and it's a good one. Fans have remarked that the Detroit and Cleveland shows from the second leg were particularly good; this set's from the second night at the Music Hall in Cleveland on January 17, 1996.

The differences in shows performed on the first and second US legs are striking, with some set list changes, additional old songs and another new song making their debut on the second leg. Even some of the *Tom Joad* songs have had slight

Straight Time: A Tom Joad tour bootleg chronology

- 11/21/95 *This Ain't No Rock 'n' Roll Show* (Doberman)
- 11/26/95 *Sour Grapes* (Babyface)
- 11/27/95 *Acoustically Incorporated* (Hurricane)
- 11/29/95 *Berkeley Night* (Crystal Cat)
Boss-a-Nova (Tuff Bites)
Hard Land
- 12/6/95 *Reasons to Believe* (Doberman)
- 12/8-9/95 *Philadelphia Night* (Crystal Cat)
The Arms of God (E. St. Records)
Railroad Tracks (Oxygen)
The Highway is Alive Tonight (no label)
The Evocator (Flashback)
Return to the Tower
- 12/16/95 *Orpheum* (Moonraker)
- 1/7/96 *Across the Border* (Montserrat Records)
- 1/17/96 *Sell It and They Will Come* (E. St. Records)
- 2/17/96 *Hamburg Night* (Crystal Cat)
- 2/21/96 *Paris '96* (Moonraker)
Paris Au Printemps (no label)
- 2/26/96 *A Quiet Night in Amsterdam* (E. St. Records)
- 2/28/96 *I'll Always Have a Home in Manchester* (Doberman)
- 2/29/96 *A Night at the Symphony* (Doberman)
Storyteller (Joad Records)
- 3/2/96 *Newcastle Night* (Crystal Cat)
- 3/3/96 *The Ghost Is Better Than the Phantom* (Doberman)
- 3/13/96 *Cirkus* (Moonraker)
Cirkus Night (Crystal Cat)
- 3/14/96 *The Ghost of Woody*
- 3/20/96 *On the Floor in Dublin* (Doberman)
- 4/11/96 *Milano Night* (Crystal Cat)
- 4/17/96 *London Night* (Crystal Cat)
- 4/19/96 *Berlin Night* (Crystal Cat)
The Sky Over Berlin (Moonraker)
Born Again (Oxygen)
Old Habits (KTS)
- 4/24-25/96 *Brixton Nights* (Crystal Cat)
South of the River (Doberman)
- 5/7/96 *Tivoli* (Jumping Cat)
Catalonian Cowboys (Apache)
Barcelona Teatro Tivoli (TTCD)
One Man One Voice One Guitar 26 Songs

changes, the most notable being a totally different harmonica ending to "The Ghost of Tom Joad."

Highlights include "Adam Raised a Cain," "Darkness on the Edge of Town," "Johnny 99," "This Hard Land" and "No Surrender." A new song called "Sell It and They Will Come" is an amusing song dedicated to all those "infomercials" found on late night TV. "Dead Man Walkin'" is performed early in the show (it was an encore song on the first leg). "Reason to Believe" is particularly good on this night, as are the "border" songs ("Sinaloa Cowboys," "The Line," "Balboa Park" and "Across the Border"). "The Promised Land" is performed in the middle of the show and is also slightly changed from its debut in Boston in December 1995.

The sound is great throughout and the audience quiets down nicely after the first couple of songs. With packaging that includes pictures from the current tour as well as the lyrics to "Sell It and They Will Come," this one's a winner.



•**Cirkus Night**
(Crystal Cat, 2CD)
Packaging: 9
Sound Quality: 10
Performance: 9

This is from a venue called the Cirkus in Stockholm, Sweden, on March 13, 1996. Highlights include "Adam Raised a Cain," "Highway 29," "Johnny 99," "Youngstown," the "border" songs, "Streets of Philadelphia," "Bobby Jean" and "This Hard Land." In fact all of the songs are solidly performed, but it still feels that some "spark" is missing, possibly due to playing for a mainly non-English speaking audience. The bonus track is a great version of "The Wish" from the Spektrum in Oslo, Norway, on March 14, complete with the spoken intro.

With this title, Crystal Cat has upped the stakes for clarity and definition for audience recordings. On first listen one could easily mistake this for a radio broadcast or a soundboard tape. Anyone looking for a good 2CD representation of a typical European show will find it here.



•**A Quiet Night in Amsterdam**
(E. St. Records, 2CD)
Packaging: 7
Sound Quality: 8
Performance: 9

This boot is from the February 26, 1996, Carre Theater show in Amsterdam, which might be one of the most beautiful halls Bruce has ever played. And the show was up to the standards of the venue—the performances of both Bruce and the audience were stellar. The title is correct as the crowd was really quiet this time out (probably because more people in the crowd understood the admonitions to keep silent). There still is some audience talking, but most of it is in Dutch. The hall itself had impressed Bruce, so he pulled out a couple of special surprises. This show featured the tour premiere of "Bobby Jean," which some fans will savor and others will hate. But the new version of "The Promised Land," first done with the falsetto voice at this show, is awesome by any standard, and perhaps the highlight of the entire Tom Joad tour. This is one of the better Joad boots in that it combines excellent sound with a better-than-average performance.

•**Southside Johnny Unplugged Volume Two**
(SLJ 002, 1CD)
Packaging: 8
Sound Quality: 9
Performance: 9

This is a worthy companion to the original *Southside Johnny and Little Steven Unplugged* title released a while back. But while *Southside*

Johnny and Little Steven Unplugged documented a single acoustic broadcast performance on WXRK in 1993, this is taken from three separate WXRK in-studio acoustic radio performances—two from 1994 and one from 1991. The first eight tracks are from the February 27, 1994, broadcast and offer the best sound overall. In attendance along with Southside are Bobby Bandiera (guitar, vocals) and David Hayes (bass) of the Jukes as well as Soozie Tyrell (violin and vocals). Soozie's presence make these sessions really special, her violin and vocals really add to the proceedings. The highlights are "Time Is Running Wild," Bobby's solo vocal cover of "He'll Have to Go," the Southside and Soozie duet on "It's All Over Now," and an exquisite version of "Rosa."

The next three songs are from the July 27, 1994, broadcast. All the performers are the same, with the exception of Soozie Tyrell. Although the sound is excellent, these sound mono instead of stereo. In fact the rest of the disc sounds mono as well. The performances are great, but it's a short show.

Little Steven is in attendance for the last eight songs taken from the November 11, 1991, "Hungerthon" broadcast. It's a shame he doesn't take an extended vocal turn, but he does add great backing vocals and guitar. Highlights of this set include "Coming Back," "Love on the Wrong Side of Town" and a rather short "Drift Away." Bobby Bandiera does a fine solo vocal job on a cover of "Pretty Woman," but I can't help wishing it was Little Steven rocking out on this tune.

There are no liner notes except for a listing of personnel for each of these sessions. There's a few photos of Southside and Bobby from at least one of these sessions. I could recommend this disc on the first eight tracks alone, so it goes without saying that Southside fans should pick this one up.

•**Nassau Night**
(Crystal Cat, 3CD)
Packaging: 8
Sound Quality: 9
Performance: 10

Don't let the above ratings fool you, what at first look

appears to be the final word on the fine December 31, 1980 (New Year's Eve) show at Nassau Coliseum in Uniondale, Long Island, New York ends up a bit of a disappointment.

Most of this show has been released on CD before, most notably on Great Dane's 4CD set *In the Midnight Hour*. While *In the Midnight Hour* is a fine set, many had problems with how it was compiled. For one thing, tracks from the December 29 show that weren't performed on the 31st were mixed in between songs performed on the 31st rather than compiled together on the 4th disc. But even worse was that in a few places songs performed on the 31st were replaced by the same songs performed on the 29th. You never got the complete 31st show.

Previously, Crystal Cat had released the 3CD *Coliseum Night* set, which succeeded by supplying the complete show from the 29th in sound that even surpasses *In the Midnight Hour*. Hope was high that *Nassau Night* would surpass *Coliseum Night* in finally delivering the complete New Year's Eve show, arguably one of the longest, if not the longest, show that Springsteen and the E Street Band ever performed. Unfortunately, *Nassau Night* falls a bit short of being the definitive version of this show because of a mastering error and a couple of song edits.

I'm not talking about between-song edits here, I'm talking about missing pieces of songs. Instead of listing the highlights (there are plenty of them, but you already knew that), I'll list the more obvious edits. "Out in the Street" has an edit at 4:06 and "The Price You Pay" at 5:09—but then again the circulating tapes have a drop-out at these respective points. Why Crystal Cat choose to eliminate the drop-out by editing the sections before and after together is a mystery since the effect is just as noticeable. "Fade Away" has an edit at 7:31 which doesn't appear on the circulating tapes or on *In the Midnight Hour*.

The song that suffers the most is "Jungleland," which contains both a mastering error and an unforgivable song edit. Most of the piano intro repeats itself at 39 seconds into the song. And at 4:21, just before Clarence's sax

solo where Bruce is singing "Lonely-hearted lovers struggle in dark corners," the "desperate as the night moves on" line is completely missing. Ouch.

On the plus side, the sound is excellent—better than *In the Midnight Hour*. To Crystal Cat's credit, they did use a great sounding source tape and didn't over-process it by sacrificing the high-end to minimize the hiss (which is present but not intrusive). There's more between-song crowd noise included in places. In particular, there's more after the end of the first set, and after "Twist and Shout" you can even hear the music on the house system start up for a bit before the crowd erupts when Bruce and the band return to the stage.

Crystal Cat recently recalled its 3CD *Berlin Night* release to correct a mastering error on the first disc and offered to exchange the bad discs for those folks who already have the set. I would like to believe that *Nassau Night* will be similarly treated. If that happens, watch out—this set will be a killer.



•**Brixton Nights**
(Crystal Cat, 3CD)
Packaging: 9
Sound Quality: 10
Performance: 10

Due to Bruce making himself available to play his Oscar-nominated song "Dead Man Walkin'" at the Academy Awards in March 1996, some sold-out shows scheduled for the UK around the same time had to be postponed and rescheduled for April. In addition, Bruce added additional shows—in particular those for Brixton Academy in London. The bulk of this set is made up of the complete first Brixton Academy show on April 24, 1996. Bonus tracks include no less than nine different songs from the second Brixton Academy show on April 25 (which explains how

this set was titled), three songs from the RAH shows, which bookended Brixton, and, appropriately, "Dead Man Walkin'" from the Academy Awards broadcast on March 25.

Unlike most of the Tom Joad sets, this opens with an on-stage announcement and some of the pre-concert music. I wouldn't know where to start with highlights from the show on the 24th. The crowd may have been rowdy, but Bruce was loose. What made these UK shows really special were all the older songs which made their live debut on this tour: "Atlantic City," "Red Headed Woman" and a dramatically rearranged "Seeds" on April 24, "Highway Patrolman" on April 25 and "Pony Boy" from April 27.

A couple of songs dropped early on in the first US leg of the tour also reappeared at these shows, like "If I Should Fall Behind" and "Point Blank" on the 25th. Some songs only performed once on this tour before also reappear here, like "Blinded by the Light" and "State Trooper" on the 22nd and 24th respectively. If this weren't enough, also included from April 22nd is the only known live performance ever of "The Angel" (I'm not kidding) from Bruce's first album. It's done Tom Joad-style and taken at a slightly faster tempo than the album. After "Dead Man Walkin'," over four minutes of the music heard over the house system leaving a show on this tour is included—in this case Ennio Morricone's "Once Upon a Time in the West."

Sound is generally as good as Crystal Cat's own "Cirkus Night," which is to say it's excellent and sets the standard for audience recordings. You would think that a 3CD set would contain pretty much all the songs Bruce played along the way on the European tour but you would need at least a 4CD set to fit them all because there's plenty missing here. Crystal Cat's packaging is typically great and includes the lyrics to "Pilgrim in the Temple of Love" as well as a picture of the set list from the 24th written in Bruce's handwriting (and you can see where he put two songs in the same spot so he could choose what song to play at the last minute). There's no question that this one's a must have. 🍷

Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame concert finally out

"Missing" in Action

The Tom Joad tour may have been on hiatus, but the singles just kept on coming. Two CD5s for "The Ghost of Tom Joad" were released in the UK. The first has the same B-sides as the European CD5 (three live tracks from the December Tower Theater shows), but the packaging is much improved. A picture disc CD comes housed in a nice digipack, both bearing the shot of Springsteen on the side of the highway.

The second UK configuration for "Tom Joad" brought a disappointing selection of B-sides: the album versions of "Meeting Across the River," "One Step Up" and "Nebraska." To make matters worse, these tracks replaced three planned live tracks from the Manchester show (which haven't yet shown up in any form). For what it's worth, the single does have handsome packaging: a color live shot of Bruce on both the sleeve and the CD itself. The UK round of "Tom Joad" singles wrapped up with a nice limited seven-inch picture disc, very similar to the earlier pic disc for "Hungry Heart."

The follow-up single was, oddly enough, not from the *Tom Joad* album; the "Dead Man Walkin'" four-track CD5 was the next release in Europe. The two non-LP B-sides it contains—live versions of "This Hard Land" and "Does This Bus Stop at 82nd Street?"—make a total of five live tracks officially released on disc from the Columbia Records Radio Hour.

Like "The Ghost of Tom Joad," "Dead Man Walkin'" was available in the US only as a one-track promo CD5. As usual, several different configurations can be found in Europe. A particularly nice European promo comes packaged in a gatefold cardboard sleeve with lyrics and stills from the movie printed inside. From Holland comes a two-track Dutch stock CD5 (paired with "This Hard Land") in a cardboard picture sleeve; a seven-inch with the same two tracks in a picture

sleeve was pressed for the Swiss market in a limited run of 300.

"The Ghost of Tom Joad" was given similar treatment, paired with "Straight Time" in Holland as a 2-track CD in a cardboard sleeve, and in a very limited run, as a 45 with picture sleeve. Springsteen singles continue to be pressed on vinyl—it's just that they're becoming more difficult to find. Another recent example, "Murder Incorporated" was issued as the A-side of a Columbia jukebox promo in Italy. The B-side of this white label promo item is by Luca Barbarossa, an Italian songwriter who was included on the Springsteen tribute CD *For You*.

"Youngstown" has shown up on CD5s in a few countries, but only on promotional discs. In France the song was issued on a one-track promo CD5 in a unique cardboard sleeve (and typically confusing for collectors in the CD age, the sleeve for this French-only release was printed in Holland and the disc in Austria). "Youngstown" also saw release in Australia, leading off a two-track promo CD5.

While "Youngstown" seemed poised to be the next single, another non-Joad track very recently saw commercial release in Europe. The previously unreleased "Missing" is paired with three live B-sides from the 4/19/96 Berlin show broadcast. Including "Darkness on the Edge of Town," "Spare Parts," and "Born in the USA," the four-track CD5 is available from several European countries and packaged in France as a bonus disc in a slipcase with *Greatest Hits*.

Until its release on CD5, "Missing," written for the Sean Penn-directed film *The Crossing Guard*, was quite hard to come by. With no soundtrack album planned, "Missing" could only be found on a promo audio cassette, part of the promotional package from the film's French distribution company, or on the home video, released in June.

Interview with Bob Costas, otherwise only officially available on



reels or cassettes as mentioned in last issue's column, was issued on CD by Sony Germany in a limited run of 100 copies. A 2CD set in a gatefold cardboard sleeve, this promo contains the full interview that was originally broadcast as part of the Columbia Records Radio Hour special.

The oft-delayed *Concert for the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame* title is scheduled for August 27, almost one year since the marathon concert in Cleveland. On Columbia, the 2CD set collects 34 tracks with three from Bruce and the E Street Band: "Shake, Rattle & Roll," followed by "Great Balls of Fire" and "Whole Lotta Shakin' Going On" with Jerry Lee Lewis. Of the left-out Springsteen performances, most notably missing—considering its historical import if nothing else—is his duet with Bob Dylan on "Forever Young." A source from the label told *ICE* magazine that "The artists pretty much picked the songs, and we went along with it"; *ICE* continues on their website (<<http://www.icemagazine.com/ice>>): "Based on what we were told, we're fairly certain that either Dylan or Springsteen (or their handlers) didn't like their performance, and therefore nixed its inclusion."

Another CD with some curiously missing tracks is a new album of Springsteen covers, *The Bruce Springsteen Songbook* from Connoisseur Collection Ltd. The label's original solicitation listed such tracks as Steve Earle's "Nebraska," Joan Jett doing "Light of Day," and Clarence Clemons's version of "Summer on Signal Hill." A source behind the



project told *Backstreets* that "Laudau's office apparently would only grant permission for the Sony tracks to be used if the CD didn't use Bruce's name or his image. As it's part of an ongoing series (*The Paul Simon Songbook*, *The Jagger/Richards Songbook*, etc.), this would have been a little difficult...." As for what remains, several of the songs are already on Rhino's *Cover Me*, but the *Songbook* CD compiles some worthwhile newer material, including "State Trooper" by the Cowboy Junkies, "Factory" by the Arizona Smoke Revue, "Tougher Than the Rest" by Everything but the Girl, and "Mansion on the Hill" by Emmylou Harris and the Nash Ramblers.

To clear up any confusion over the recent Japanese reissues of Springsteen CDs: the *only* CDs that have been remastered with Super Bit Mapping technology are *Born to Run* and *Born in the USA*, distinguishable by their unique cardboard packaging and specific SBM/20 bit mastering notation on the obi. There is a new set of reissued Springsteen CDs from Japan, from *Greetings* through *Greatest Hits*, but a source at Sony Japan verifies that the CDs in this set have *not* been given the SBM treatment—no matter what the guy behind the counter says.

—Christopher Phillips

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CLEVELAND—HOPING TO FIND THE TWO couples from the hotel lounge after the show, 1/17/96. They took one photo with Bruce. We were seated next to the door and talked to him. If this is you, or someone you know, please contact Judi Johnson, 33550 N. Hampshire, Livonia, MI 48154.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY MR. BRUCELEGS: "I SWEAR I'll drive all night just to buy you some shoes" (or boots, or cheese, a new earring, visit Columbus, whatever).

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Continued from page 5

married the next day when the tickets were going on sale. He said that depending on whether or not he got the tickets, he would walk down that aisle either very happy or disappointed. The weather was still frigid, and a tall bearded man brought his car around for one of the women in our "group" to seek shelter in and keep warm. The 40 year-old woman went into a nearby drug store to buy cookies for everyone. Somebody brought a beach chair in which we took turns sitting to give our tired feet a rest. Each person was looking out for the next. This allowed me to see the generosity and unselfishness in people. The *Darkness* record was blasting as the whole line recited each lyric word for word. When noon came, the first 50 people received wristbands, a symbol of hope.

Sure enough, the next day everyone returned and waited for their wristband number to be called. One woman would not leave until she saw that every single person on line was able to get tickets. We were happy for each other and left that day with two tickets that symbolized perseverance. Come to think of it, we did not even catch each other's names. But we didn't have to. There was an understanding between us, something that could not be touched. As my friend and I left to walk to the car, it had to be one of the happiest moments in my life. It was not only because we were able to get the tickets, it was the determination and strength that made it worth it. We had learned from one another. Seven strangers were joined together by one man, as his kindness brought about a kindness in his fans.

On the night of the show my friend and I saw some of our pals from the line and said hello. I knew that I probably would never see those people again. Yet the memory of their faces is still in my mind. As for the concert, Bruce did not let us down. The theater was so silent when he sang that one could hear a pin drop, and his voice shot through me like lightning.

Springsteen brings something out in me that nobody else can and that I now know only his fans can understand. Speaking from a teenager's point of view, I wish that there were more young fans out there who could appreciate and understand his music. Nonetheless, it feels good to know that the long-term fans who have been there to grow up and change along with Bruce still support him. Thanks *Backstreets* for helping to keep Bruce's music alive and for allowing a young girl from Long Island to see that she is not the only one who can appreciate the power and influence that this one man holds.

Lauren Moraski
Elmont, NY

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